

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**THE GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF NORTHERN IRAQI REGION AND
ITS IMPACT ON THE RELATIONS WITH TURKEY**

THESIS

Zhiyan Najmaddin Hassan HASSAN

**Department of Political Science and International Relations
Political Science and International Relations Program**

Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Filiz KATMAN

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İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ



YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ONAY FORMU

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I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results, which are not original to this thesis (/ /2019).

Zhiyan Najmaddin Hassan HASSAN

To my parents





FOREWORD

I would like to thank my advisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Filiz KATMAN for guiding and supporting me for finishing this thesis. You have set an example of excellence as a researcher, instructor, and role model.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	: Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i>)
CHP	: Republican People's Party (<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i>)
EU	: European Union
GCC	: Gulf Cooperation Council
HLCC	: High Level Cooperation Council
IPA	: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
ISIS	: Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham
JAICA	: Japan International Cooperation Agency
KOICA	: Korea International Cooperation Agency
MHP	: Nationalist Movement Party (<i>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi</i>)
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPEC	: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PKN	: Polish Oil Concern Orlen (<i>Polski Koncern Naftowy Orlen</i>)
UN	: United Nations
USA	: United States of America



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KUZEY IRAK BÖLGESİNİN JEOPOLİTİK KONUMUNUN TÜRKİYE - KUZEY IRAK İLİŞKİLERİNE ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Bu tez, Kuzey Irak'ın Türkiye ile olan ilişkilerine coğrafi, siyasi ve ekonomik zorluklar gibi alanlardaki jeopolitik olanaklar açısından genel bir bakışa odaklanır. Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak arasındaki ilişkilerin asıl temelini resmeder ve inceler. Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak arasındaki ekonomik ilişkilerin iki ülkeyi nasıl etkilediği sorusuna cevap bulmaya çalışır. Daha çok Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak arasındaki ilişkileri geliştiren siyasi, ekonomik ve coğrafi yönleri inceler. Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak arasındaki ilişkileri inşa eden ana enstrüman olarak aynı derecede enerji yönünü gösterir. Kuzey Irak Yönetimi tüm komşularıyla ilişkilerini sağlamlaştırmaya başlamaktadır. Kuzey Irak'ın coğrafi konumundan dolayı, özellikle turistler için, birçok insan Kuzey Irak'a ilgi duyar ve komşu ülkelerden özellikle Türkiye'den çok sayıda iş adamı İbrahim Halil Gümrük kapısına gelir. Kuzey Irak petrol, gaz ve birçok mineraller gibi doğal kaynaklar açısından zengindir; bu durum da Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak arasında iyi ilişkilere yol açmaktadır. Kuzey Irak'taki İŞİD mücadelesi Erbil ile Bağdat arasındaki ilişkileri engellemektedir ve bölgede ekonomik çöküşe yol açmaktadır; ancak bu durum Kuzey Irak'tan Türkiye'ye ve diğer ülkelere petrol ihracatı ve yakın gelecekteki gaz ihracatı gelişirken Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak ilişkileri üzerinde etkisi olmaktadır. Bu tez başlıca dört bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm tezin giriş bölümü olarak temel araştırma sorusu, alt sorular ile tezin niteliği ve araştırma yöntemine odaklanır. İkinci bölüm coğrafyanın Türkiye ile Kuzey Irak arasındaki ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisini ele alır. Üçüncü bölüm Kuzey Irak'ın siyasi konumunu ve bu konumun Türkiye ile ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisi hakkında bilgi verir. Dördüncü bölümde Kuzey Irak'ın enerji rezervi ve enerjinin Türkiye ile ilişkileri nasıl etkilediği analiz edilecektir. Sonuç bölümünde de Türkiye-Kuzey Irak ilişkilerinin farklı yönleri ortaya koyulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Doğalgaz, Kuzey Irak, Petrol, Tarım, Turizm, Türkiye, Ulaşım.



THE GEOPOLITICAL POSITION OF NORTHERN IRAQI REGION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE RELATIONS WITH TURKEY

ABSTRACT

This thesis is focused on an overview of Northern Iraq relations with Turkey, especially in terms of its geopolitical potentials, on those fields like geographical, political and economic challenges. It portrays and examines the main essence of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. It tries to answer the questions of how economic relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq affect each country. It explores the political, economic and geographical aspects which foster the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. It equally shows the energy aspect as the key instrument in building relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. Northern Iraqi government begins to strengthen the relationship with all neighbours. It is due to the Northern Iraq's geographical position, especially its importance for tourists, so, a lot of people are interested in Northern Iraq, number of businessmen from the neighbour countries especially from Turkey come to Ibrahim Khalil custom. Northern Iraqi region is rich in terms of natural sources such as oil, gas and many minerals, so, this leads for having good relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. ISIS fighting in Northern Iraq interrupts relations between Erbil and Baghdad and causes economic downfall in the region, but it has an impact on Turkey and Northern Iraq relations in exporting oil and in the near future exporting natural gas from Northern Iraq to Turkey and to the other countries. This thesis consists of four main sections. The first chapter, as an introductory chapter, is focused on main research question, sub-questions and characteristics and research technique of the paper. Second chapter deals with the impact of geography on the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. The third chapter informs about political position of the Northern Iraq and its impacts on the relations with Turkey and the referendum in North of Iraq. In the fourth chapter, energy reserves in the Northern Iraq and its impacts on the relations with Turkey will be analysed. In the conclusion, various aspects of the Turkey-Northern Iraq relations are revealed.

Keywords: *Agriculture, Gas, Northern Iraq, Oil, Tourism, Transportation, Turkey.*



1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis studies geopolitical relations between Turkey and Northern Iraqi region focusing on the economic relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq, not leaving out other factors such as political and geographical relations. The geopolitical relation between Turkey & Northern Iraq is one of the most interesting topics in current world politics. Iraq's economic blockade in 90s was the reason for the greatest inflation and Northern Iraq region as a part of Iraq was not excluded from the blockade. Then, Northern Iraq region established its regional government after the Kurdish people uprising and start creating relations with neighbour countries especially Turkey. Turkey's geographical location can be used as a gate to the whole world. The relation started by exporting goods to the region through Ibrahim Khalil's border gate, which considered as a good beginning for developing the relations.

The objective of this study is to show dynamics behind Turkey and Northern Iraq region's relations, its developments and key aspects. This thesis attempts to contribute to the recent academic efforts for studying Turkey and Northern Iraq relations. As such, the content of the thesis is important because it offers a brief account of strategic Turkey & Northern Iraq relations.

This thesis is divided into four main chapters. Chapter one gives introductory remarks on the subject. Second chapter deals with the geographical aspect of Turkey-Northern Iraq relations, summarizing geographical position of the Northern Iraq and its impacts on the relations with Turkey, in this part the light will be shed on the geographical border of Northern Iraq-Turkey with its effect on their relations, namely transportation tourism agriculture and energy, the fertility of the soil.

Third chapter deals with the political position of the Northern Iraq with the impacts of several factors such as, Turkey's approach to the Middle East, disputes, visit of the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs to the region, peace process in Turkey. In the fourth chapter, energy relations are discussed since oil and gas reserves have a vital role in the relations with Turkey, latest developments with regard to the

relations with Iraq will also be revealed. In the conclusion, diverse aspects of the Turkey-Northern Iraq relations are revealed.

The Kurdish in northern Iraq with this situation had like ISIS war, the Beja of northern Iraq's government has severed from the central Government, at that time the Kurdish government many crisis like Financial Crisis and political crisis, however the political and finance relations between Baghdad and Erbil in a badly.

At that times near the finished the ISIS war in northern Iraq, the all Kurdish parties decision to referendum for northern Iraq, to the Kurdish people decision if they need stayed with Iraq or divided in Iraq. Referendum theme in North of Iraq and Turkey's attitude about north of Iraq's referendum. As far as methodology is concerned, a qualitative method is applied. This thesis conducts content analysis and assessing available literature on the topic. Secondary data analysis is used in this thesis, and it is focused on a descriptive analysis which is based on carrying out intensive research on the relation between Turkey and Northern Iraq. In the research information from the relevant ministries books, articles, reports, newspapers, thesis and news announced at the web sites in Turkey and Northern Iraq are used.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: GEOGRAPHY&RELATIONS

2.1 Northern Iraq

Northern Iraq is a geographical region positioned in the Northern Iraq. It is a federal region consists of Northern Iraq presidency, government of Iraq, Parliament. Establishments have the authority of legalization and enforcement for many aspects as specifying region's budget, security and police, education and health politics, supervising natural resources by enforcing of economic infrastructure. Northern Iraq is the only federal region to have a national council parliament (Hama Kareem 2013, pp. 28-37).

Northern Iraq is a geographical and political term for Southern of Iraq, which has (73,618 km²) (Talib, 2005, p. 20), in 1926 it has been added to Iraq officially, but the Northern Iraq as a political term is being used after the Kurdish peoples' uprising of March 1991 and retraction of the Baghdad government establishments, from that time the region gained semi-independence and it's being governed by Kurdish political bodies till this day (Hama Kareem 2013, pp. 21-27).

Currently, Northern Iraq, which has a population of five million and 200,000 thousands, consists of governorates of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk and Halabja. The area is about forty thousand square kilometres which is slightly bigger than the Netherlands and four times the size of Lebanon. This statistic only consists of the provinces under the Northern Iraq authority, excluding the areas of Ninawa, Salahaddin, Kirkuk, Wasit and Diyala provinces, these areas are called disputed areas, or areas of the Article 140¹ (O'Leary et al, 2008).

Article 140: Article 140 of the Constitution of the Republic of Iraq

First: The executive authority will take the necessary steps to complete the implementation of the requirements of Article 58 of the Iraqi State Administration Law for the transitional period, with all its clauses.

¹ For details see http://www.kncna.org/docs/pdf_files/oleary_paper.pdf

Secondly: The responsibility placed upon the executive power in the transitional government, and provided for in Article 58 of the Iraqi state, the Transitional Administrative Law shall extend and continue to the executive authority elected in accordance with this Constitution, provided that it accomplishes completely (normalization and census and concludes with a referendum in Kirkuk and other disputed areas them to determine the will of the people) in a maximum period of at the most Thirty of the month of December two thousand and seven.

Regional government in the Northern Iraq has the enforcement authority and abides by Northern Iraq laws which are set by Northern Iraq Parliament, which has been elected by Northern Iraq civilians democratically. The first election has been conducted in March 1992, and the first regional government cabinet began to work. The government has established eight cabinets so far, the eighth cabinet of the Northern Iraq has been established in March 2014 with Nechirvan Barzani as the Prime Minister. The constitution of Federal Iraq has acknowledged Northern Iraq, Northern Iraq Parliament and all its official establishments of Northern Iraq; the constitution also recognizes Peshmerga forces as the region's border guard (KRG, 2013). The government's eighth cabinet, which is a coalition government, consists of many political parties and it's the reflection of the diversity of Northern Iraq's people with the other ethnic minorities that living in the region such as Chaldean, Assyrian, Turkmen, Yazidis, Arabs and Kurds are living in harmony together.

The language of the northern Iraq is Kurdish language. Kurdish language is the most widely spoken language in the region, which has been known as the formal language of Iraq alongside Arabic language after Iraq operation in 2003. Then, the Kurdish region's official languages for government purposes are Kurdish and Arabic and many Kurds are bilingual. Kurdish is in the Indo-European family of languages. As the Kurds are involved with different minority ethnics in the region, the Kurdish language is written in a range of scripts including the Perso-Arabic alphabet and the Latin alphabet. The Kurdish cultural revival of the early 1930s and 40s and afterward until the mid-70s in Iraqi Kurdish region was not so much concerned with converting the Kurdish language into one with modern literary prestige. The central point here is that the limited literature on the Kurdish language demonstrates that there is no single unified standard language. Certainly the development of written Kurdish in the last fifty years has resulted in two distinct dialects that are written in prevailing

scripts: Sorani and Kirmanji. There are two other sub-dialects that are similar to each other, as well as to ancient Persian, yet geographically separate from each other and they are Zaza and Hawrami (also known as Gorani). Unlike Sorani and Kurmanji these sub-dialects of Kurdish have little written tradition (Aziz 2011, p. 52).

The two most widely spoken dialects of Kurdish are Sorani and Kurmanji. Other dialects spoken by smaller numbers are Hawrami (also known as Gorani) and Zaza. The Sorani Kurdish dialect uses Arabic script while the Kurmanji Kurdish dialect is written in Latin script. Sorani is spoken in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates, while Kurmanji is spoken in Duhok governorate and some parts of Erbil governorate. As the Region's Kurdish-language media has developed and the population has moved, today nearly all people in the region can speak or understand both of the major dialects. The regional government's policy is to promote the two main dialects in the education system and the media. Arabic is also an official language and is widely spoken or understood. Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Chaldean Neo-Aramaic and Turkmani are also spoken by their respective communities. The government promotes linguistic diversity and rights, and schools have been established that teach mainly in Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Chaldean Neo-Aramaic, Turkmen and Arabic (KRG, 2015).

Eleven public universities exist in Northern Iraq with many permitted private universities. Some of these universities use The English language as their main language in learning and examination; such as at the American University of Iraq Sulaymaniyah. Northern Iraq has two international airports, they are Erbil International Airport and Sulaymaniyah International Airport, and one can travel straight to Europe and the Middle East from these airports. The Duhok International Airport is under construction now (Department of Foreign Relations, 2015).

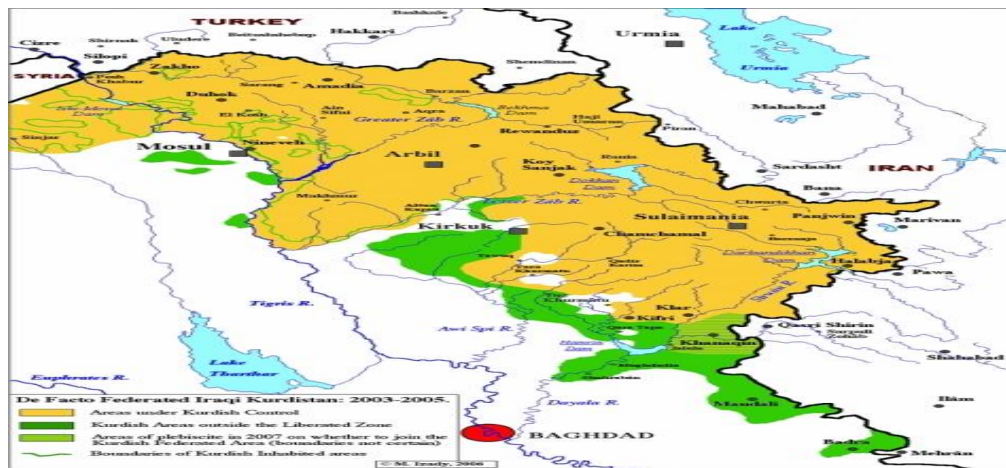


Figure 2.1: Map of Northern Iraq

Source: Kurdish Academy of Language (2019). Map of Northern Iraq, http://www.kurdishacademy.org/sites/default/files/images/IraqKurd_2003-2005.preview.jpg

2.2 Geographical borders

It is necessary to present an introduction about the geographical border of the Northern Iraq and Turkey to make reveal the impacts on the relations. Northern Iraq is the part of Iraq, which is positioned inside Iraq border, the Iraq that was made after the First World War, this region is a humanitarian region in the first place, although it is the land of the Kurds and the majority of its population are Kurds (Muhammed et al, 1998, p. 58), but multiracial and multi religiously speaking it is separate from Iraq. Beside Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen and Assyrians live together, this in a hand, on the other hand, although the majority of the region's populations are Muslims, but Christians and Yezidis live there too (Department of Foreign Relations, 2015).

The researchers agree that Hamrin Heights can be regarded as the border of the region with the Southern Iraq Northern Iraq border with Iraq starts from the south-east of Basra town in Wasit province and goes up to north till Oil bridge in the east of Mandalay town alongside Hamrin Heights till Fatha, it stretches alongside the Tigris river to north of Mosul city and then to east turns towards Khazr town then to east towards the Iraqi border with Syria in the north of Baja town (Muhammed et al 1998, pp. 13-21).

Northern Iraq is a political term named to Southern Iraq. The region's area is 73,736 km² (Talib, 2005, p. 20), which is more than 9% of the total Iraq area (O'Leary, 2002). In 1926 this region is being attached, officially to Iraq, but the Northern Iraq as a political term began after the uprising of March 1991 and the retraction of

former Baghdad establishments, Northern Iraq gained a semi-independence, which was governed by Kurdish political authority, the region area at that time was 41,939 km² nowadays this number is changed (Ministry of Education 1998, p. 63).

This region formerly constituted of Erbil (Capital of Northern Iraq), Sulaymaniyah, Duhok and Halabja provinces, but now the provinces have been changed, retraction of Iraqi armies from (Kirkuk and Diyala) provinces with Peshmerga, although those areas were called disputed areas formerly, or areas of the Article 140, also land is an essential aspect of the nationality constitution of any nation, the area or geographical place of the base of societies' activities; it is also the place to organize and unite the aims, interests and cultures. The language of the people in this geography was Hamada in the history. Northern Iraq throughout the history was a shelter to conquests and conquerors with traders and travellers (Hama Kareem 2013, pp. 21-27).

These facts have their traces in the demographical constitution of its population considering its fertile soil, diversity and appropriate climate; the most popular immigrations were by Semites, Persians, Greek, Arabs, Tatar and Turks alongside Europeans in modern history. It is noted that the simple surface and meadow areas had the most effect on the population of the area; also, the groups and individuals that travelled to the place of passing of time could affect the language, tradition and way of living. From another side, the population of mountainous areas and heights has preserved their religion and language in a perfect way. These phenomena paved the way for ethnic differences, which is the identity of the areas on a national, tribal or religious scale. They also had effects on national opinions and they bring in tribal thinking (Darhela, 2015).

The Northern Iraq climate categories are divided into two major climate ranges:

1- Mediterranean climate region: this climate covers north to north east of the region till south with the mountainous borders of south; this region covers more than 50 thousand kilometres square. It is known as very cold winters and cool summers, the raining starts from middle winter, it has a dry summer. This region has the most rate of raining from all other Iraqi regions, annual rain rate is 500 mills, the rain increases towards east and north east, it causes intercity road blockage for some days.

2- Semi dry hot climate region: this climate covers the other area of Northern Iraq, rain is the same as the above region (dry and hot summer, wet winter) but it is lesser than 500 mil, the winter is less cold and rarely snows (Barham, 2014).

2.3 Turkey

Turkey has an area of (7,779,452 km²) which consists of (96.96%) of the Asian continent and it is called Anatolia, and its remaining of (3.4%) is in Europe (Konda Araştırma ve Danışmanlık, 2015), Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits separate both parts. Turkey's geographical significance is that it is the midway of Asia and Europe on land. This made Turkey a bridge between them, Turkey is connected to Iran plateau from the east and to Arabic homeland from the south (Davutoğlu, 2010).

Geography of Turkey also has become an obstacle in front of Russian advancement towards the Mediterranean Sea and the oil fields of the Arab Peninsula. The Black Sea from the north, the Aegean Sea from the east and the Mediterranean Sea from the south has made Turkey have a beach line of 2,615 km (Metz, 2015).

Dardanelles and Bosphorus straits of Turkey have made the neighbouring countries of Black Sea especially Russia, is under the control of Turkey. These are all factors to make Turkey a strategic area in the world, they also made Turkey policy either globally or locally to have special influence (Al-Stabi 2002, pp. 20-24).



Figure 2.2: Map of Turkey

Note: Most of Turkey is part of the Asian continent, but a relatively small area (bordering Greece and Bulgaria) is part of the European land mass.

Source: Info Please (2019), Turkey Map, <http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/turkey.html>

2.4 Transportation

Northern Iraq is the ideal place for those who desire a natural and non-manipulated landscape of heights and ancient sites. During the hot and dry long days of summer of Northern Iraq, the people and tourists can enjoy the breeze of hills and mountain bases. As we have discussed the geography of the region and the fertility of its soil with its wet mountainous climate and it shares borders with Turkey, this made a large number of tourists visit this area annually, and from the region, tourists can visit Turkey, by airways or land ways.

2.4.1 Airway

Northern Iraq has two international airports, which are Hawler International Airport, and Sulaymaniyah International Airport. Another international airport in Duhok is under construction. The majority of trips from Europe and the Middle East fly to Northern Iraq directly, without going through Baghdad airspace. The majority of airlines is qualified as international air travel, airplanes, IATA, has begun their trips to Northern Iraq, there are many more expected to start their trips too. Many of airplane renting companies started their trips to Erbil or Sulaymaniyah. Although the ISIS war reduced tourists after 2014, each week there is 98 air travels to Erbil International Airport and 48 air travels to the Sulaymaniyah International Airport from Turkey. Besides, there are 3000 tourists each day between them, which can be considered as good revenue for both sides, and shows us that Northern Iraq has a free geographical situation without the central power in Baghdad (Department of Foreign Relations, 2015).

2.4.2 Roadway

Entering Northern Iraq through roadway from Turkey is normal. Ways are suggested to travel or from Istanbul Ataturk Airport and then from a two-hour long trip to Diyarbakir. Turkish visa can be obtained instantly upon arrival at Istanbul Airport. It might be necessary to get luggage back from the international or local terminal. It is possible to rent taxis from Diyarbakir Airport to travel to Ibrahim Khalil border. The majority of taxi drivers are familiar with those areas. It is advised to travel in the morning because of the length of the travel, therefore, if it was necessary, spend the night in Diyarbakir. After crossing Ibrahim Khalil border, another taxi can take tourists to the intended area in Northern Iraq. The travel length between Diyarbakir

and the border is about four hours and a half, the travel to Duhok is an hour and a half, the travel to Erbil is four hours and to Sulaymaniyah is six hours. There is an alternative travel way, which is from Iran-Syria, but this is not used frequently (KRG, 2013).

2.5 Tourism

2.5.1 Tourism in Northern region of Iraq

Northern Iraq land is formed by mountains, sierras, meadows, canyons and hills. It has a cold winter with different training rates, which range from 200 to 1000 miles, the snow also has different falling rate, especially in the mountainous areas, and this made lots of creeks and large and small rivers like (Great Zab, Little Zab, Siminarud and Khabur which all empty into Tigris River). Many types of trees and bushes cover the mountainous areas. The meadows are hot in summer and the mountainous areas are medium and cool, this means the more you go towards mountainous areas, the lower temperature gets. There are many mountain tops, which Halgurd peak from Hasarost sierra is the tallest peak (3607 meters) (Board of Investment, 2015).

Looking from Northern Iraq nature; history and civilization carry lots of possessions, like tourists, religious and ancient sites, canyons, meadows, hills, mountains, caves, engravings, mosques and churches. Beside these the fine climate of Northern Iraq and the warm welcome assist in a tourist attraction. With these, the support of active trading is necessary to present a strategic geography.

All these are factors to make tourists travel to Northern Iraq with types of tourism given below:

- Religious tourism: Northern Iraq is a centre for ancient religions like Mitranic and Zoroastrianism. Northern Iraq is also the land of the peaceful religious living, like (Islam, Christian, Yezidi, Haki and Kakaii), there are also some other religion and beliefs. It also was the land of some prophets, like (Zoroaster, Abraham the friend of God, Noah, Job, Uzair and Daniel), there are also many shrines of holy men. It is worthy to note that the doctrines of (Qadri, Naqshbandee and Sahrawardi) are in growth and each have thousands of followers in Northern Iraq. A large number of mosques, churches and ancient shrines can be seen in Northern Iraq, which is the factor for tourist attraction locally and globally to come and pray and pay their

respect. Some of the tourists visit the shrines of (Byara and Tawelah) sheiks, which are located in Hawraman of Halabja province. Some of the holy sites of Northern Iraq are: “Kak Ahamdi Sheikh, Balak Sheikh, Uzair the prophet, Sultan Muzafaradin in Hawler and Abdul Qadir Gailani” shrines. The shrines of Christians are: “Mar Raban Boya, Mar Binyah Qadesha in Hawler”). The largest Yezidi temple in the world is “Lalash Temple” which is located in Shekhan city near Duhok (State Organization for Tourism 1981, p. 5).

- **Environmental tourism:** Northern Iraq as a special climate, in winter snow, falls in mountainous areas, in spring the climate is nice and in summer the temperature is normal. It has natural and artificial trees, from flowers and plants, from animals and birds, from cultural and historical sites, from the breath-taking views of villages and tents of traveller tribes all over the heights and lows of the area’s topography. All the waters of the springs and creeks are sweet and drinkable. It has numerous high peaks like Halgoord (3706 m), Qandil, Skaran, Zozik, Korek, Biradost, Handerin, Shireen, Gara, Mateen, Zimnako, Pirmagroon, Safeen and many others, there are also many canyons and lowlands, with forests, the National Park of Halgoord-Sakran has a 600 km² is being set to establish with the cooperation of an Austrian organization nevertheless of many beautiful waterfalls and natural sceneries in the heights and lows in Northern Iraq (Naqshbandee 1998, pp. 258-261).
- **Cultural Tourism:** Northern Iraq has Kurds, Turkmen, Assyrian, Chaldean, Armenians and Arabs nations, they live in harmony, there are many tribes of Kurds, and each tribe has its own tradition, festival, rites, costume and dialects related to their places. They have their own utilities that they made themselves to agriculture, furniture, jewellery, cosmetics, gowns, food and artistic materials and so on. These contribute to the uniqueness of Northern Iraq and make it separate from neighbouring countries and the world. Northern Iraq has many cultural museums in Hawler, Duhok, Sulaymaniyah and Kalar. It has many handmade professions and until this day, many of them are still being made and shown to the tourists (Naqshbandee 1979, p. 39).
- **Political Tourism:** Northern Iraq has an ancient history, there were many local and foreign forces that ruled the area, many wars and conflicts has

ended on Northern Iraq soil, the most famous of them was the war between Alexander the Macedonian and Darius the Persian which was near Hawler and ended with Alexander's victory. The Islamic wars, Mongol, Ottoman, Britain army and sequential forces of Iraq have left a trace on the soil. There are obvious traces of Kurdish emirates from Medes to Sheikh Mahmood on Northern Iraq land. The different and separate of these traces is the one of the former Iraqi regime, because they have conducted political and armed crimes against the people of Northern Iraq, the trace of their crimes can never be swept away, like the Anfal incident, chemical warfare and demolition of more than 5 thousand villages, the genocide of 182 thousand people with disappearing 8 thousand people from Barzani area and founding hundreds of mass graves (Dizayee 2001, pp. 33-57).

Until this day numerous remains of heavy and light weaponry can be found in museums in different parts of Northern Iraq, there are many monuments, genocide graves and statues of revolutionists and leaders in Northern Iraq, the libraries and history can tell at length the incidents, the crime traces are witnesses for the tourists and visitors who travel to Northern Iraq (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).

- Archaeological Tourism: Northern Iraq has more than 3500 archaeological sites, a number of these sites are important for tourists, as the castles of (Hawler, Khanzad, Dere, Diween, Sartika, Akre, Amedy, Rawandiz, Sherwana and Barzinja), there are also some of the engravings like (Qisqapan, Khins and Halamitan), alongside some engraved statues like (Hareer, BelulaDarband, HawirDarband and Meerquly), there are also some archaeological caves in Kurdish (like Shanadar, which neanderthal human beings lived there, 9 skeletons have been found in this cave and it dates back to 60 thousand years BC, Four Pillars cave which was Zoroastrians' temple, Gundik which has some engraved portraits, Bastwn cave and Hawdyan, ChamiRezan, Hazarmerd and Zarzy, in these some archaeological instruments have been found), Museum in Sulaymaniyah, Hawler and Duhok cities exist with thousands of archeological samples, agricultural life has started 10 thousand years BC in ZewaChami village and 7 thousand years

BC in Charmoo village, these sites are ready for tourists to visit (Naqshbandee 1998, p. 260).

- Shopping Tourism: This type of tourism has its significant role in Northern Iraq Region, in which the tourists spent a lovely time by shopping in the malls in cities of the region, like Family Mall, Majidy Mall, Tablo Mall, Royal Mall, Mega Mall, City Star in which all of the famous brands can be found in them, beside electronic gaming for children and artificial snow ski, bowling and some other entertainment ways for the tourists. There are also a large number of gardens, swimming lakes, and other tourism necessities in the wide area of Northern Iraq (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).
- Aquatic Tourism: Northern Iraq has lots of heights and lows with peaks and long canyons, in winter rain and snow, falls, there are lots of small rivers with springs. Great Zab and Little Zab which are sources of Tigris River in Iraq flow through Northern Iraq soil; there are many creeks in the mountainous areas, and lots of waterfalls like Gali Ali Bag, Bekhall, Ahmad Awa, Sharansh, Solav and Baste. There are also some dams and lakes, like (Dukan, Darbandikhan, Duhok and Bawashaswar) dams in Sulaimani, Duhok and Hawler. There are also some open and closed swimming pools. All these aspects will provide aquatic tourism for tourists, especially water games. The water sources in Northern Iraq are sweet and drinkable (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).
- Therapeutic Tourism: There are two types of therapeutic tourism in Northern Iraq, natural and human made. In natural type, there are some mineral creeks. These are used to cure (itching diseases, Jaundice, kidney stone removal and some other diseases). In addition, the clean and fresh air of the beautiful nature is beneficial for mental diseases.

The second type, human-made therapy, includes all the hospitals of Northern Iraq, especially those of private sector in which foreign doctors of advanced countries come to Northern Iraq, this makes tourists visit Northern Iraq from Iraqi cities and neighbouring countries, adding advancement to tourism (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).

- **Adventurous Tourism:** Northern Iraq has numerous canyons, mountains, forests, big and small rivers, in which the tourists can explore and climb the mountains like Halgoord, Pirmagroon, Korek, Biradost, Shireen and Safeen, they can tour and explore the deep and long canyons, the serpentine like rivers and deep caves. There are numerous caves in which their depth and composition have not been explored yet, there are many peaks but few have been seen. Annually many tourists visit Northern Iraq for such exploration (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).
- **Exhibition and Conference Tourism in Northern Iraq:** This type of tourism is an important one. The tourism profession is considered the brightest profession in the world, currently; it is the most important sector in international commerce. Tourism, from its economic point of view, is considered as a producing sector, in which it has an important role in raising the national salary, improving expenditure money, importing foreign currency (for example dollar), opening chances to use local workers which are in itself is an aim of the diverse tourism program advancements.

All of these items contribute to making the region an aim of production, which is a factor in conducting annual international conferences of tourism, economics, culture, medicine and professions. These are important necessities in general advancement of the region (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).

Since 2005, the Kurdish region of Iraq has enjoyed increased interest in travel to the region and the economic benefits that followed. From little under 400,000 in 2007, the number of visitors increased year-on-year to just less than three million in 2013. The majority of the region's visitors were from southern Iraq, although an eleven-fold increase in external visitors over the same period highlighted the potential for both regional and international markets. To encourage the continued emergence of the sector, the Kurdish Board of Investment authorised the spending of over 6 billion US\$ in key projects. An indicator for the impact of this investment includes the number of hotels and restaurants operating in the Kurdish region of, increasing from 105 to 620 since 2007 (KRG, 2016). The culmination of these efforts arrived in 2014, when Erbil was officially designated the 2014 Arab Tourism Capital by the Arab Council of Tourism.

Erbil has been appointed the 2014 tourism capital by the Arab Council of Tourism. During the council's conference in Cairo, four cities Beirut, Taif, Sharjah and Erbil, competed to win the title of tourism capital for the year 2014. According, the security situation in Erbil was another reason why it won the contest. The Arab Council of Tourism has several conditions necessary to win the tourism capital title. For example, Erbil had to present 40 different activities that it will host throughout the year (KDP, 2016).

Erbil has already several activities that take place annually, such as celebrating the Kurdish New Year Newroz, the anniversary of Erbil's liberation, an international marathon and a beauty queen contest. Several days will also be designated to introduce Kurdish traditions and culture. "During those days, we will offer tourists traditional Kurdish food and present Kurdish traditions. Additionally, 12 theatres are currently being built at the Family Mall for an international film festival Erbil will host in 2014, expects that the city will need at least \$200 million in order to meet the demands of the Arab Council of Tourism. "We have a huge responsibility in order to maintain the title, Erbil has several tourist resorts. That they will encourage the private sector to renovate these places and the government will provide water, electricity and quality roads for them. The private sector has applied to build \$1 billion worth of hotels (KRG, 2016).

In the year 2014, Erbil had world class hotels and several more hotels and motels will be built. According to the statistics from the Erbil governorate, the city currently has around 150 hotels. But it needs more as a projected 3 million tourists will come to Erbil by 2014 (Xebat, 2012).

That they will renovate the old neighbourhoods and markets around Erbil's citadel by 2014, and build a huge concert hall in the downtown. Mawlawi Jabar, the director of the tourism department, said "The number of tourists coming to Erbil is increasing year by year. The number may reach 4 million by 2014 and this will help economy." While Erbil is the capital of Northern Iraq, the fact that it has been appointed as the tourism capital for Arab countries and it is achievement officials are proud of (Muhammed, 2012).

Table 2.1: Number of tourists in Northern Iraq

Number of tourists visiting Northern Iraq from 2007 to 2016		
Increase in percentage	Number of Tourists	Years
	377,397	2007
48%	558,860	2008
42%	791,345	2009
66%	1,313,841	2010
30%	1,702,390	2011
30%	2,216,993	2012
33%	2,952,027	2013
-48 %	1,529,434	2014
-49%	1,117,501	2015
-1.57%	1,100,000	2016

Source: Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism (2016). Tourism, <http://bot.gov.krd/about-kurdish/tourism>

Number of tourists according to governorates with competition and percent changed. Number of tourists in 2014 decreased 48% as compared to 2013. Decreasing tourist in 2014 is due to the situation of Iraq especially in Northern Iraq and surrounded countries because of Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in the last eight months of 2014 (Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, 2016).

Thus, this way of developing has been inverted since 2014, because of the significant structural and existential challenges. Structurally, the tourism sector has suffered due to the lack of investment since 2014. This has been largely driven by high-profile budget contestations between Erbil and Baghdad, along with a collapse in global oil prices that has diminished the main source of the northern region's government revenue. The effect of this was immediate, with nearly 35 major investment projects that were scheduled to begin in 2013 being put on hold. Existentially, the turbulence created over the war against ISIS has both deterred foreign investment and heavily damaged the appeal of the KRI as a safe destination. This is especially relevant for

international tourists with little experience of the region. The region's government has instead focused efforts on attracting internal and regional visitors, in particular from Iran, Turkey and Lebanon (Rasaiah, 2016).

However, a closer estimation of growth since 2007 highlights a number of shortcomings in KRG strategy that have harmed efforts to develop tourism beyond budgetary and security issues. Firstly, too much attention appears to have been spent on investment in new hotels and restaurants. This was particularly relevant within Erbil, which saw an estimated 500 new hotels opening with little correlation to either the population of the city or the number of new visitors being received. Far less investment was concentrated on supporting infrastructure, including new road, healthcare and transportation systems that could form the foundation of a growing tourism sector. Secondly, the response to the clash with ISIS has served to dissuade internal tourists, beyond the harm to insecurity and instability. Specifically, the northern region's government has been criticised for discriminatory or hard policies at travelling checkpoints. These limitations on free movement have served to harm local businesses by deterring visitors from southern and central Iraq, the primary market for tourism in the Northern region of Iraq, and this encouraged tourism to competitor destinations such as Turkey. Air travel would ease some of the difficulties in passing through checkpoints, but remains a costly option for those with low incomes or large families.

Thus, the regional government must work to make an environment in which the prospective investors can be welcomed with tightly-regulated protection measures and few bureaucratic hurdles. Despite seemingly strong political will among government leaders, the process of registering new businesses within the Kurdish region remains laborious and uninviting. With the on-going budgetary issues facing the regional government, such an approach cannot be afforded. Prime Minister Barzani acknowledged the critical need for such reforms during the tourism conference in March 2016, urging relevant government sectors to challenge routines and the bureaucracy so that the sector could develop (KRG, 2016). The Kurdish regional government emphasised the significance of moving away from independent on oil as an economic model for tourism. As the budgetary crisis facing the regional government, the tourism can become a viable alternative pillar of the economy increasing to the government and the region.

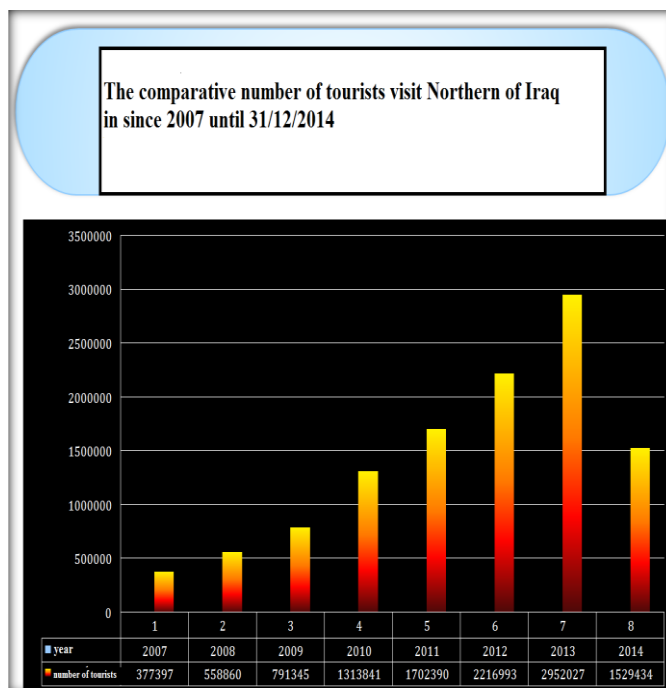


Figure 2.3: The comparative number of tourists visiting Northern Iraq

Source: Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism (2016). Tourism, <http://bot.gov.krd/about-kurdish/tourism>

2.5.2 Tourism in Turkey

Tourism in Turkey is focused largely on a variety of historical sites, and on seaside resorts along its Aegean and Mediterranean Sea coasts. Turkey has also become a popular destination for culture, spa, and health care tourism. Istanbul is one of the most important tourism spots not only in Turkey but also in the world. There are thousands of hotels and other tourist-oriented industries in the city.

Turkey's largest city, Istanbul, has a number of major attractions derived from its historical status as capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. These include the Sultan Ahmed Mosque (the "Blue Mosque"), the Hagia Sophia, the Topkapi Palace, the Basilica Cistern, the Dolmabahce Palace, the Galata Tower, the Grand Bazaar, the Spice Bazaar, and the Pera Palace Hotel. Istanbul has also recently become one of the biggest shopping centers of the European region by hosting malls and shopping centers, such as Metro city, Akmerkez and Cevahir Mall, which is the biggest mall in Europe and seventh largest shopping centre in the world. Other attractions include sporting events, museums, and cultural events.

Foreign tourist arrivals increased substantially in Turkey between 2000 and 2005, from 8 million to 21.2 million, which made Turkey a top-10 destination in the world for foreign visitors. 2005 revenues were US\$17.5 billion which also made Turkey one of the top-10 biggest revenue owners in the world. In 2011, Turkey ranked as the 6th most popular tourist destination in the world and 4th in Europe, according to UNWTO World Tourism barometer (World Tourism Organization 2012, p. 6).

Other destinations in Turkey are beach vacations and Blue Cruises, particularly for Turkish delights and visitors from Western Europe, are also central to the Turkish tourism industry. Most beach resorts are located along the south-western and southern coast, called the Turkish Riviera, especially along the Mediterranean coast near Antalya. Antalya is also accepted as the tourism capital of Turkey. There are lots of cultural attractions elsewhere in the country include the sites of Ephesus, Troy, Pergamon, House of the Virgin Mary, Pamukkale, Hierapolis, Trabzon (where one of the oldest monasteries is the Sumela Monastery), Konya (where the poet Rumi had spent most of his life), Didyma, Church of Antioch, religious places in Mardin (such as Deyrulzafarân Monastery), and the ruined cities and landscapes of Cappadocia. Diyarbakir is also an important historic city, although tourism is on a relatively small level due to waning armed conflicts (Investment Support and Promotion Agency, 2013).

Ankara has an historic old town, and although it is not exactly a tourist city, is usually a stop for travellers who go to Cappadocia. The city enjoys an excellent cultural life too, and has several museums. Anitkabir, the mausoleum of Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, is also located in Ankara.

In January 2013, the Turkish government announced that it will build the world's largest airport in Istanbul. The operation has an invested 7 billion Euros and will have its first part of a four-part plan completed by 2017 (Maierbrugger, 2013). The number of tourists to Turkey reached its highest number in 2014, Turkey attracted around 42 million foreign tourists, ranking as the 6th most popular tourist destination in the world (The Daily Sabah, 2015).

As a consequence of the continuous fall in tourism to Turkey in recent years, as of October 2016 in Istanbul's famous bazaar once crowded shopping streets are almost empty, "the streams of tourists who used to visit the market each day have trickled to

a halt" (The Guardian, 2016). The number of foreign tourists visiting Istanbul declined to 9.2 million in 2016, a 26 percent decrease compared to 2015 (Hurriyet Daily News, 2017).

Table 2.2: Number of visitors visited Turkey

Year	Visitors
2010	28,632,204
2011	31,456,076
2012	31,785,780
2013	39,724,912
2014	41,263,670
2015	36,244,632
2016	25,352,213

Source: Investment Support and Promotion Agency (). Travel and Tourism, <http://www.invest.gov.tr/en-US/infocenter/publications/Documents/TOURISM-INDUSTRY.pdf>

Thus, it can be said that the year 2016 is described as the second year of huge losses on both visitor numbers and income, a "year of devastating losses", with Turkish tourism businesses stating that they "cannot remember a worse time in the sector" (The Guardian, 2016). The reason for the disastrous fall in tourism is attributed to a coup attempt, political tension with Russia and terrorist attacks.

2.6 Agriculture

Northern Iraq has an agricultural specialty with a suitable atmosphere to growth agricultural, poultry and farm animal products. But destroying 4500 villages (Abdulla 1998, pp. 232-233), burning their farms and force moving farmers to large cities by Baath regime the base of this economic source damaged and it made with a plan for a political goal after these college of agriculture in Salahaddin University in Erbil (Capital of Northern Iraq region) has been closed to make people not even thinking of products in agricultural sector. After 26 years of Kurds ruling in northern Iraq the Baath's plan to this sector has not been cancelled yet, till now there is no academic organization according to universal standards while there is not a necessary

farm laboratory what a modern agricultural producers need to become a strategic to get self-holding and gain a food security.

In a situation of Northern Iraq region, it suffers from economic problems with a certain war against ISIS it needs food security more than any time and make it another economic source after oil, as economists say that agricultural sector product makes a good income to get out the region of its economic problems, while nowadays it is only 3-4% of the regions income. Most of the farms and agricultural lands surrounding cities and towns were turned to residential areas, extended to that 1 million and 600 thousand decare turned off from being agricultural lands (Gulan, 2015).

The existing products are making by the old forms so it does not see any adventure, and investment authority has no activity in agricultural sector during the absence of any practicable plan in this sector they only care about neighbour countries products, 95% of daily requirements imported from the other countries. The political, economic, social and scientific effects make agricultural products in constant erection, when only 9% of man power in northern Iraq is working in agriculture, that's why with wheat and barley products only 10% of internal requirement is produced (Gulan, 2015).

Most of the agricultural lands with farms were sold and built villas and personal necessities on it. There is no plan to hold a balance between residential and agricultural lands. That is why the amount of agricultural products is not as required. About the reason of erection in agricultural sector Dr. Kawa Abd Al-Kareem captains of agricultural engineer's association in northern Iraq says that: "The triangle of agricultural sector is land, agricultural workers and farmers and a suitable atmosphere. The three of them exists in northern Iraq. These basics are necessary for advantage and growth of local agricultural products, forest, poultry, fish, farm animals and all the agricultural productions. Even amount of raining, atmosphere change and having regular winter and summer are necessary for growing these products. But erection and neglecting agriculture was because of political, economic and scientific reasons. The political reason returns to neglecting this sector by government especially Baath regime when the process of destroying villages and agricultural lands occur then economic effects came by because of unsystematic economic plans, this neglecting made people without agricultural philosophy and

vision". Closing college of agriculture for many years then opening it without scientific basic necessary made the region without modern scientific advantage in this sector. In summation of 8000 members of agriculture engineers association only 3000 of them are working in their specialty field, which is too little number for profession of agriculture without scientific modern basics (Gulan, 2015).

The reasons of erection this interesting sector is the disability of establishing an agricultural economic because there isn't an agricultural survey, balancing agricultural lands and using modern agricultural systems that guaranty the local products competing with the products of developed and especially neighbour countries. So, the Northern Iraq region does not get of the traditional reality and they should make a communication system between related colleges and academies with the related ministries to make a practicable master plan for this sector. The Ministry of agriculture and water sources decided to use only 1.8% of budget to growth of this sector which is as la explorers and monitors say it is not enough it should be at least 10% (KRG, 2013).

In another side, Northern Iraq region should be looked at the advanced countries with advanced agricultural productions in past and nowadays, especially in encouragement of local products, such as: Turkey and Iran, they give all enough encourage to their farmers to get as much as can local products, they picking up million dollars in agricultural scientific advantage annually (Gulan, 2015). Northern Iraq is one of the most fertile regions for agriculture; it has a good water source with a fertile soil, because of knowing agriculture age in Northern Iraq, which evaluated as (9-10) thousand years (Rashid 1980, p. 20). Northern Iraq owns four million acres (approximately 2,470,000 million acres) and 30 billion square meter water; these can depend on in an agricultural field, this vast area cannot be used properly because of droughts and villagers immigration to the cities (Abdulla 1998, p. 232).

The region's people are depending on imported products. Northern Iraq productions between (1983-1984) had been exported to middle Iraq and Arab peninsula countries, but after the attacks of former Iraqi Regime of Baath party to different parts of Northern Iraq and conducting Anfal, chemical warfare, village destruction, displacing villagers and burning forests, the people had lost all hope of agriculture. The other reason was villagers' immigration to cities which changed the profession from farming into other industries. After the uprising, the agricultural sector was one

of the weakest sectors in Northern Iraq, because agricultural machinery and fertilizers were few and expensive, although at that time the agricultural lands were rising because a large number of villagers were going back to their lands, but the rate of production has seen a decrease (Hama Kareem 2013, pp. 38-48). Opposite to the agricultural sector weakening in Northern Iraq, the sole income of the Northern Iraq was from costumes which provided (92%) of all Northern Iraq income in 1994 (Azizi 1999, p. 141).

Customs included all the goods which came into Northern Iraq Government of the neighbouring countries like Iran, Turkey and Syria. This income was obtained mainly from Turkey-Northern Iraq route, the significance of this route economically for Northern Iraq was it controlled every kind of land connection between Turkey and the former Iraqi government, which the import and export between the two countries were very necessary to be from this route. This route was also the most important trading route to the outside of Northern Iraq because at that time the region government was providing every necessary material from that route. Although Turkey had the full control of this route and made it a pressure card against Northern Iraq at that time, which has become the root of implications between the Northern Iraq and Turkey relations, for example at the end of 2001 until the end of 2002 Turkey had closed this route three times (Bozcali 2008, p. 12). For Turkey, the process was so important, because they thought beside of the local profits it was for making factories work with money, in another side in Northern Iraq's markets many workers in Kurds cities in Turkey begun to work (Hama Kareem 2013, p. 44). It can be argued that nowadays the commercial relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq turned to a strategic one, as according to the statistical data's of the investment board the amount of the commercial exchange between them is about 10 billion dollars annually, while the amount of commercial exchange between Turkey and Iraq is 14 billion dollars (Hawrami 2013, p. 20). Improved strategic relations serve both for Iraq and Northern Iraq because it has a good economic profit for the citizens.



3. HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK: IMPACTS OF POLITICS

3.1 New Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East & impacts on Northern Iraq

After Kemal Ataturk's authority in 1923-1937, the second modern period of Turkey started. It was in the period of "Turgut Özal", because before his reign Turkey was isolated with Europe countries and United States of America, Özal renewed the foreign policy also economic sectors progressed which helped Turkish citizens grow. During this period, eastern world widely opened its doors for Turkey. This was because Islamic politicians and Kurds actively took part in elections. Also, they were competing with secularism and national compels. Lately, Turkish army showed its power in and outside of Turkey. These activities were made Özal being the Turkish Prime Minister in 1983-1989 and president in 1989-1993 known as Özal period or "the second modern period of Turkey" (Laçiner 2009, pp. 153-205).

Changes that Turgut Özal made were in two different categories. They were internal and external. If one takes a look at the internal side, it is seen that Turkey was dealing with them in a liberal way. It was divided into three parts which were freedom, of thought religious freedom, and economic freedom. Also, Özal could take people's attention and he was having many fans during his being the president, especially the people that were in the middle of Anatolia. He was smartly getting near to rich people in those areas. Also, Özal could take people's attention and he was having many fans during his presidency; especially, the people that were in the central Anatolia. He was smartly getting close to rich people in those areas. Also, he was friends with old political groups in the area. From famous Özal's sayings is "Serving people is serving God". He could get people's attention by this. Most of his fans were Islamic politicians (Zurcher 2009, p. 469).

The external changes that Özal made were in a time that big changes happened to the world. In the beginnings of 1990s, the second war of gulf and collapse of Soviet Union in 1991. These events were very good for Özal's being active in his external relationships. Turkey's historical experience was only to care about the Western world and ignore the Eastern world. This had made Turkey alone in the east (Hama

Kareem 2013, pp. 129-133). Özal changed this trend and started to work with the east. He believed that Turkey must have its own real authority in the Islamic world and in the Middle East. This method was really successful because Turkey has been a bridge between East and West now (Muhittin 2002, p. 7). These things were all reasons that people call Özal's period as the second modern period of the Republic of Turkey, because Turkey was very different in policies with internal and external powers (Nur al-deen and Rice 1997, pp. 18-19).

International events like the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that changed the world from two sides into one single side, and the second Gulf War in 1991 that made the United States of America (USA) as the greatest power in the area. Powerful sides changed and Turkey being a member of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and as a central country faced Kurd's problems in the north. Also, Central Asian republics, Caucasus and Balkan countries became new dilemmas for Turkey (Fuller 2006, p. 111). Turkey's openness to the world, Middle East countries and improving relations with neighbour countries, solving local problems are good factors for the change point for the development of Turkey.

3.2 Northern Iraq in international arena

The international relations are always based on the interests between foreign countries the relation is political, economic, geographical, energy etc. However, Northern Iraq's region is not an independent country but after the establishment of its regional government in 1991, it was regarded as a geographical and de facto force as an independent region start establishing its foreign policy. While, Northern Iraq is not an independent country so as to have a formal country's embassies in foreign countries, but in concept, management, analytical and practical movement Northern Iraq has a par diplomatic identity.

It is in the nature of international relations that most of the alliances and political coalitions are based on mutual ideology or interests. Northern Iraq is in such a geopolitical environment, not only the political coalitions are regional, but the powerful countries are ready either with or without that political coalition in order to make a continual endeavour, make Northern Iraq be part of those political coalitions. This would be very important that Northern Iraq must maintain its positivity and

neutrality as much as it could, also to maintain power balance and never take side with anyone against the other (Hawrami, 2013).

After 1991, Northern Iraq was able to begin its foreign policy as a geographical and factual force in its region, but following 2003 this factual situation changed as a known region, in the Iraqi Constitution under Article 121, clause 4, “Northern Iraq can, in Iraqi embassies represent its culture and economics” (Hawrami 2014, pp. 133-145).

Then enforcing the constitution of the Federal Republic of Iraq, Northern Iraq decided to open its official foreign offices outside Northern Iraq, so as it could maintain the foreign relations. It can be asked about what signifies the opening of foreign offices outside Northern Iraq. In reply, it can be said that: it is for establishing and strengthening Northern Iraq relations with foreign countries, As well as protecting Kurdish peoples' interests and Northern Iraq' interests. Encouraging and raising the level of political and economic relations of the region with international entities, especially with neighbouring countries, are to advance peace, political stability, trade and mutual interests. Because of the stability and peace that exists in Northern Iraq, some of the countries have opened their embassies and representative offices in the capital of the Northern Iraq in Hawler, in addition to this Northern Iraq could open its representative office in some foreign countries. This is a key factor to advance and facilitate political, economic and trading affairs. The number of the embassies, offices and international organizations that exist in Northern Iraq are Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran – Erbil / Sulaymaniyah, Consulate General of the Russian Federation, Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, Consulate General of the Republic of France, Consulate General of the Republic of Turkey, Consulate General of the United Kingdom , Consulate General of the United States of America, Consulate General of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Consulate of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Consulate General of the Palestinian National Authority, Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates, Consulate General of the Republic of Czech , Consulate General of the Republic of Hungary, Consulate General of the People's Republic of China, Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Consulate General of the State of Kuwait, Consulate General of the Republic of Sudan, Consulate of the Republic of Italy , Consulate General of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Consulate

General of the State of Palestine, Consulate of the Republic of Korea, Embassy Office of the Kingdom of Sweden, Consular Office of Romania, Embassy Consular Agency of the Republic of Poland, Commercial Office of the Republic of Austria, Commercial Office of the Republic of Bulgaria, Embassy Trade Office of Canada, Regional Section for Economic & Commercial Affairs of the Hellenic Republic (Greece), Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Spain, Honorary Consul of Japan, Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Denmark, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Belarus, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Slovakia, Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Brazil European Union Delegation - Erbil Liaison Office, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), UNAMI Regional Representation Office, ICRC Regional Office, United Nations Mission to Iraq (Department of Foreign Relations, 2015).

In addition to those, in the meantime, regional government could develop its relations and open about 14 representative offices in various countries, which are Representative in Australia, Representative in Austria, Representative in Europe Union, Representative in France, Representative in Germany, Representative in Iran, Representative in Italy, Representative in Poland, Representative in, Russia, Representative in Spain, Representative in Sweden, Representative in Switzerland, Representative in Britain and Representative in USA (Department of Foreign Relations, 2015).

All of these embassies and government representatives could facilitate the relations of trading, economics and politics, also to organize official visits of trading and political delegations of foreign countries to Northern Iraq. Also to organizing and supporting those activities that would be advancement factors of the region's position outside, to organize and cooperate Northern Iraq government relationships with Foreign Ministry of Iraq and its embassies, to cooperate and support those activities that strengthen Northern Iraq position outside and cooperate between Northern Iraq government's establishments with international community, to offer legal services with document corrections to Northern Iraq civilians outside, although the regional government of Northern Iraq didn't open its representative offices in some countries, but it has a strong relations with them as Turkey, that we can talk and present numerous facts about it. At the beginning of relation between Northern Iraq and

Turkey it was not good, but step by step it developed and saw advance that now there are many politically and economic bonds and contracts between both of them.

3.3 Political relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq

In the old times and specifically the political relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq region, it is seen that their associations were not good enough and sometimes, they were getting worse. This was because Turkish counter-terrorism operations in the region. Hence, political associations are very significant for both sides because northern area is the only region that has autonomy, its own government, and its own parliament (Jamestown Foundation 2008, p. 72).

On the other hand, because Turkey is a member of NATO, having Kurds in the game is a good characteristic of Turkey. After that, Anti flight areas were provided for Kurds then they knew the importance. It is argued that Turkey was treating Kurds as the gate of its new associations with the Eastern (Rozha 2011, p. 85).

Iraq after that was attacked by the United Nations in 2003, and the situations got worse and unsafe in Iraq. Turkey started to carefully work with Iraq in the fields of politics. Its relationships go under the authority of Kurdish leaders in the government. After that Turkey started to work with the region separately, big changes happened to the policies of Turkey (Hawrami 2014, pp. 18-20).

Political changes in Turkey were reasons for the new friendship between Erbil and Ankara. After that in 2009, Ahmet Davutoğlu, who was the then Foreign Affairs Minister of Turkey, visited Erbil. He also met Masoud Barzani, president of the Northern Iraq. This was a historical visit because Davutoğlu was the first Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs who visited Northern Iraq. Also, this was a great start for political and economic business together (KRG, 2009).

The political relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq was not in a good state, but after political changes in the Middle East, Turkey's relations changed and developed with these counties in a way that their relation with Northern Iraq developed. With regards to Kurds, Özal was focused on discussion and dialogue. He asked PKK to eliminate their guns and start discussions with the government. Turkish government wanted to have witnessed and/or some bystanders in the case, so they met with both leaders Jalal Talabani and Masoud Barzani in 1992. They were both leaders of two powerful parts of the region in that time. Masoud Barzani was the leader of PDK,

and Jalal Talabani was leader of the PUK. After Özal's death, no one was very serious to solve the problem. Then, the conflicts started to appear again between Turkey and PKK. These made the Turkish government and security to arrest the leader of the PKK. In 1999, Abdullah Öcalan, arrested head of the PKK, was arrested and put in prison (Mira, 2014).

Relations between both sides developed. And this case has always been discussed in the meetings, especially when the President of Northern Iraq Masoud Barzani, was visiting Turkey. The first visit was made in 2011. Masoud Barzani visited Turkey and met Abdullah Gül, the then President of Turkey. Also, he met with Ahmet Davutoğlu, the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs. They claimed that "military solutions are no more preferred and allowed. We do not get anything with our guns". This was a step to restart the peace process again.

The second visit of president Barzani was very important and successful. It was in 2013 when Masoud Barzani visited Diyarbakir and met with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the then Turkish Prime Minister. It was a significant positive event because Barzani's visit was the first one after 21 years. He was highly welcomed by the local people. Also, he gave a speech to a huge number of people who went to see him. Barzani talked about his happiness about the peace process. He said: "Yes to peace, No to war" (Taving 2014, p. 4).

The last visit of Barzani to Turkey was on 10 December 2015. He visited Ankara and met Ahmet Davutoğlu, the then Prime Minister of Turkey. They talked about the peace process in Turkey. After three years, the process finished at the end of July. Also, Barzani met with the Kurdish side in Turkey (Hawler, 2015).

3.4 Interference of external powers on Turkey and Northern Iraq

3.4.1 American policy in the Middle East

The president of US began with a sense of optimism felt throughout the Middle East, but now there is disappointment toward his foreign policy in the final year of the then US President of Barack Obama administration. If they believe that his foreign policy is a disappointment. At the beginning of his presidency, the goal was to shift the focus of American foreign policy from the Middle East to Asia based on his speech on the first of his term. When the Arab Spring began, the then US President of Barack Obama administration fell prey to the temptation to attempt to shape events

to further American interests. However, the administration's intervention in Libya ultimately backfired over the long term, which made Obama reluctant to directly intervene militarily in Syria (Barakat et al, 2015).

The United States is supporting Saudi policy in Yemen to convey that it has not abandoned its ally in the wake of the deal with Iran. Ghabra feels that Yemen was lost multiple times; first in 1991, when the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) did not absorb Yemen into its apparatus; and then in 2011 when it failed to effectively support and capitalize on the youth revolts. He believes all parties must be involved in any negotiated settlement, regarding the conflict in Yemen. From a pragmatic perspective, Iran must be involved, either indirectly or directly. Ghabra concluded by stating the same inclusive model in Yemen should eventually apply itself to Syria (Barakat et al, 2015).

Furthermore, it's worth to say that US has a great and effective role in the middle east, the people and politicians of the entire region highly interested in the changes that happens after the elections of US and its new administration. As it is obvious that US has presidential election in November 2016 Donald J. Trump was elected as the 45th president of the United States. Many foreign leaders around the world were quick to congratulate the new President-elect on his victory. Many questions regarding Trump's views on foreign policy in general and towards the Middle East in particular are still outstanding. Trump is likely to be forced to make significant concessions with regards to his electoral promises if he is to advance US national interests in the region, in particular national security.

The war against ISIS and terror will remain a top priority for the US under Trump. While he opposes American boots on the ground, Trump still needs to devise a long-term strategy that goes beyond simply bombing them. The new President-elect appears to want to disengage from Iraq completely, as he opined that "Iran is now taking over Iraq. We spent two trillion dollars in Iraq. We lost thousands of lives, we have wounded soldiers. And we have nothing. We cannot even go there and every time we give equipment to Iraq, the first time a bullet goes off in the air they leave it" (Time, 2015).

His negative view towards the Iraqi government is starkly contrasted by his praising of Kurdish forces. Acknowledging the need for ground forces in fighting IS, he

intends to significantly ramp up support for the Kurdish groups fighting IS in Syria and Iraq. In several interviews during his presidential campaign, he praised the Kurdish fighters and said that he would increase US support “We should be arming the Kurdish... they have proven to be the most loyal to us... they have great hearts, they’re great fighters, and we should be working with them much more” (Time, 2015).

It is unclear whether Trump has considered the implications of increasing military support for the Kurds and not Baghdad, not only will it cause friction between cooperating partners, but most ISIS-held territory is also far away from Kurdish areas. Despite Trump expressing frustration about the trillions of dollars spent by the US in Iraq and the seemingly low return on investment, the fact that he views and laments Iran as “taking over the country” suggests complete disengagement will not be his preferred policy. Instead, the reality of the sunk costs associated with Iraq means Trump is likely to continue supporting Baghdad both militarily and financially, possibly with stricter conditions.

It will not be easy for Trump to streamline his isolationist vision of disengaging with Iraq and withdrawing from Afghanistan with the overarching long-term objective of advancing American national security and combating terrorism. The US can withdraw only if it establishes and maintains strong relations with local partners. This not only requires much more time, but also a careful balancing of relations in the region, including with the state of Israel and the Kurds in Iraq and Syria. It also threatens to be undermined by his desire to cancel the Iran Deal. Trump will therefore need to make serious concessions regarding his electoral promises. Although it would be easy and tempting for him to unconditionally ramp up support for Israel, this would isolate America in the region by alienating other partners thus undermining longer-term objectives in the war against terrorism (Van Zoonen, 2016). For the Iraqi Kurds on their part, it may be tempting to ride the wave of Trumpian support to the fullest, as it could help advance their goal of independence. However, they should be mindful of the pitfalls and carefully balance their relationship with the US to avoid friction with other regional actors such as Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Baghdad.

3.4.2 Relations between Turkey and USA

The apprehension Ankara of USA policy in Iraq prior to the current conflict and back to the aftermath of the first Gulf War, when, led protection zone in northern Iraq, including the no-fly zone to the emergence of a Kurdish autonomous entity. Throughout most of the nineties, it proved that Turkey approve the stationing of American and British planes at Incirlik air base to support the no-fly zone in northern Iraq has become one of the most important efforts to contain Saddam Hussein, USA policy pillars. It can be said with confidence that without Ankara to the United States suffered centre in Iraq from serious setbacks. Prior to the 2003 war, the United States of America, a statement from Turkey, transferring confidential teams from Turkish territory into Iraq to lay the cornerstone of the invasion process (Aliriza and Aras 2012, pp. 5-7).

In general, the security has realized about closer relations between Turkey and the regional government. While factors such as the strained relations between Ankara and Baghdad, have raised USA concerns that the convergence process may have gone to the well too, this dynamic comes simultaneously with the budget which is precisely the concerns of the regional government of convergence in policies closely with Turkey, fearing that raises the ire of Iran. Taking these factors into account, it may reach a rapprochement between Turkey and the regional government to the point of saturation, although it is likely to remain intimate relationship between them in the near term (Cagaptay and Evans, 2012).

Turkey's geopolitics is increasingly at the centre of attention after the failed coup of July 2016. In this short article it will try to explain in a comprehensive and organic way the geopolitical turmoil in Turkey using the analysis of the "clash of civilizations" from Samuel Huntington (Geopolitical Monitor, 2016). Turkey, from its historical role in the region as well as its unique geographic situation is a natural bridge between two continents and two civilizations. It is argued that Turkey is greatest example of a civilization fault line. Turkey is a nation state historically engaged in a civilization conflict with two external civilizations (the Christian West and the Orthodox-Russia East) as well as an important participant in the internal struggle for supremacy inside the Islamic civilization, both in the context of Sunni and Shiite (Geopolitical Monitor, 2016).

During the Cold War, Turkey joined the western alliance, enjoying financial aid and the military technologies of NATO. The laicism of the nation in the ideological line of Kemalism, and the hope of joining the European Union, created good relations between the West and Turkey. Furthermore, the US was pushing for the integration of Turkey into the European Union to try and make the border of the EU identical to that of NATO. In this context, Turkey served as a shield between the West and Russia, both in the southeast of the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea (Bruno, 2016).

With the end of the Cold War, ambitions from the past started to arise and all the ingredients for a perfect storm have been converging to fuel Islamic populism: A small, rich, secular and well-educated elite versus a mass of religious-oriented people, a regime of laicism imposed by the state against a sharp and well spread religious sentiment, supported by the lower classes of society. Step by step, Turkish foreign policy has gradually shifted from “zero problems with neighbours” to “Neo-Ottomans,” and more divergence between Turkey’s interests and the West’s interest have been developing in recent years.

In the Syrian civil war, the divergence between the West and Turkey has finally become visible. If at the beginning the US and Erdoğan had the same main objective to eliminate Russia influence in the region as well as weaken Iran’s position in Middle East, the situation has gradually changed, and the threat of Islamic State has become more important for Western civilization, which has helped to make the Kurdish forces the most important US ally in the war. Turkey refuses to accept his secondary role inside the West and behind its core state, the US. Erdoğan has not hesitated to move closer to Russia and make a “secret deal” with Putin, after Syrian and Russian authorities expressed concern about Syrian ethnic divisions; Turkey launched the offensive “Euphrates Shield” (Geopolitical Monitor, 2016).

The events are about the limits of globalization and the failure of the soft power policy of some progressive American analysts concerning the West’s policy toward Turkey. In particular, under the Obama presidency, the goal was to demonstrate that it is possible to avoid a clash of civilizations; Turkey-US relations should have proved de facto that it is possible to build an inter-civilization global community under the UN umbrella, with the US as leader of the ‘free world’. This ambition was clearly stated by Obama himself during his first state visit to Turkey as US president

in April 2009. Obama said that “I am trying to make a statement about the importance of Turkey, not just to the United States but to the world. I think that where there’s the most promise of building stronger Turkey-US relations is in the recognition that Turkey and the United States can build a model partnership in which a predominantly Christian nation, a predominantly Muslim nation”, he then continued, “that we can create a modern international community that is respectful, that is secure, that is prosperous, that there are not tensions inevitable tensions between cultures which I think is extraordinarily important” (Nicosia, 2016).

Relations between USA and Turkey after USA's elections and starting Donald Trump As America's new president has been decreased because of the direct USA's support to HDP which made Turkey confused Because Turkey describes HDP as terrorist organization To solve these problems in May 2017, the Turkish President Erdoğan visited USA and hold a meeting discussing effects of these problems.

3.4.3 Relations between Northern Iraq and United States

The relations between the United States and the Iraqi Kurds, the only Kurdish movement, which has at present an interactive relationship with the United States, which parallels the five stages of American foreign policy towards the Kurds in other countries in the Middle East.

Developments between the United States and the Iraqi Kurds, which began on a humanitarian basis in the form of economic aid to the existence of a confidential relationship, but directly between the two parties arrived at the official level in July 1972 as a result of a number of factors. These were the factors that made the existence of the Kurds useful as a tool to balance, among other things, a Soviet penetration in both Iran and Iraq, and the support of the United States along with Iran as the second pillar of the strategy of Nixon against Soviet communism and the Iraqi Baathist regime, in addition to the policies of Saddam Hussein nationalism and nationalization policies and the Treaty of friendship between Iraq and the Soviet Union in 1972, where he began in the post-cold war a new era for the country in international politics (Kharontaki, 2012).

A wide open and official relation in 1992, culminating in the aftermath of the events of September 11 in which America felt that the establishment of stable and institutional relations with the Kurds, it is of strategic importance to its interests in

the region. As to Turkey's refusal to participate dynamically in the war on Iraq in 2003 it led to the emergence of the role of regional Kurds, and eventually evolved into the shape the United States policy toward the Kurdish issue within the framework of the Iraqi state in the post-Saddam era, and therefore considered the fifth stage of the relations between them.

After the events of 11th September 2001 in the United States stage, the Northern Iraq acted as an entity semi-autonomous and more independence in its relations with the United States. The oil contracts signed individually with foreign companies; including the US, as well as the role of regional and international Kurds, refers to the beginning of the recognition of the dynamic and vital role in international politics, backed by the United States and regional and international powers (Kharontaki, 2012).

Finally, signing of a military agreement between the Region Government and the United States announced the regional government announced the signing of an agreement between the provincial government and the United States on July 12, 2016, the signing of a military protocol between Elissa Slotkin, US Assistant Secretary of Defence and cream Chenkali, Interior Minister representing the Peshmerga and the presence of the President of the Kurdish region of Iraq, Massoud Barzani, the signing of the protocol after a meeting between President Barzani and Elissa Slotkin, US Assistant Secretary of Defence. Regional government confirmed that the protocol being signed for the first time formally between Hawler and Washington, will provide the United States and continue to the salaries of the Peshmerga forces to secure and increase their support and assistance to the Peshmerga forces until the end of the war against ISIS. A political crisis due to the economic crisis as a result of low oil prices, which pushed the regional government to non-payment of the Peshmerga and the employees' salaries, created a state of tension in living life to the people of the region, as prevails between the territory parties (Anadolu Agency, 2016).

3.4.4 Relations between EU and Turkey

Continued positive agenda, launched in 2012, to support and complement the accession negotiations through enhanced cooperation in a number of areas of common interest: political reforms. Alignment with the acquit dialogue on foreign

policy, visa, mobility and migration, trade, energy and the fight against terrorism; and participation in EU programs. The Committee expressed its serious concern about the developments in the area of rule of law and fundamental rights. He encouraged Turkey to conduct a deeper dialogue with the Committee during the preparation of new initiatives and legislation, concerning the implementation of existing laws and policies (European Council 2014, pp. 3-5).

Turkey's foreign policy and Turkey's integration in the international system, for example candidacy in the European Union, has become a new space for Turkish business people to influence. Through economic activities abroad, a new relationship with the state has begun, and gained more "legitimacy" in the negotiations with the state while playing the role of mediator between Turkey and foreign countries.

An agreement was signed between the EU and Turkey in return December 16, 2013, in parallel with the launch of the visa liberalization dialogue. It has been conducting a series of peer evaluations in order to assess the status of implementation of Turkey visa roadmap. It has ratified the readmission by the European Union and Turkey agreement and its entry into force. Full and effective implementation of face-to-face all member states are crucial. Turkey and the European Union continued to work to improve their cooperation in the energy field, extending the scope to obtain nuclear and sustainable energy.

The increase between the link between Turkey and the European Union, in the areas of agriculture and rural development, and the work will focus on food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy, agriculture and fisheries. These will be used as the basis for priority sector programs enhancing structural reforms, allowing for more targeted assistance and improve the impact of the financial assistance. Turkey participates in the following EU programs: the Seventh Framework research program, Customs, Fiscals, and Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programmers, progress, culture and lifelong learning, youth in action. Turkey has also recently concluded or is in the process of concluding new agreements for a number of programs (European Council 2014, pp. 3-14).

Political criteria and political dialogue enhanced examines the making of Turkey towards meeting the Copenhagen political criteria, which are capable of stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights require, and

respect for and protection of minorities. It also monitors compliance with international obligations, regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations with the countries of the expansion and the Member States. Support the European Commission's actions relating to migration in countries expand inspired by the pre-accession (IPA) funds neighbourhood (European Council 2014, pp. 4-9).

Turkey is currently hosting more than 2.7 million Syrian refugees registered and adheres to the European Union for Turkey's help in dealing with this challenge. Facility for Refugees in Turkey, managing a total of 3 billion Euros for the years 2016 and 2017, provides for a joint coordination mechanism, designed to ensure that meet the needs of refugees and host communities in Turkey a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The facility focuses on humanitarian aid, education, and management of migration; health and municipal infrastructure, social and economic support (European Commission, 2016).

3.4.5 European Union and Northern Iraq

Iraq has been facing internal and external turmoil since the 1980s. The years following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003 have been characterised by a high degree of political volatility, sectarian violence, population displacement and socio-economic devastation. Subsequent UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions have provided a broad mandate to the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to assist and support Iraqi political and reconstruction process (United Nations Security Council, 2004). Thus they start to develop their relations and this clearly reflected on the Kurdish region's government as well as the development of the northern cities economically and investments.

Then after the ISIS attack to Iraq and particularly northern region's minority districts in 2014 EU helped the regional government and the send aid to the internal refugees as well as arming the Peshmerga whom fighting ISIS since then. Then the delegations from different countries start to visit the region to confirm their support to the regional government by sending emergent aids to the refugees.

They focused on issues of priority to the education of homeless children and remove ISIS booby traps so that displaced people can return to their homes, as well as a review of the existing cooperation, including an agreement to launch a working

group to discuss ways of cooperation in the energy field, and the possibility of an informal dialogue on migration (Rudaw, 2016).

European Union grave concern at the dire humanitarian situation and the displacement of large numbers of civilians, especially in the northern regions as a result of attacks by ISIS and other associated armed groups, the Ministers noted the great efforts of the solidarity that the European Union and its Member States and make the delivery of humanitarian aid and welcomed the commitment of additional European funds as well as a host of the Coordination Center for responding to situations of the European emergency and activation of Civil Protection of the European Union at the request of the Iraqi government, to provide assistance in including a mechanism that sort through airlift humanitarian aid to northern Iraq adapts to the needs in this area. The European Union stresses the need to take urgent action to facilitate, in accordance with international humanitarian law, and access to populations in need and welcomes the efforts made by the United States and other partners (European Council, 2014).

The European Union, Government of Iraq and the regional government to work together in calling for a rapid and sustainable agreement on all outstanding issues, including energy exports and oil revenue sharing, and respect for Iraq's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

3.4.6 Relations between Turkey and Russia

Historically, the Russian Empire often expanded at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, and the relations between Russia and Turkey are often formulated by the number of wars fought and predecessor States. But there have been periods of cooperation and interdependence as well, most notably during the Russian Civil War in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, which coincided with the Turkish War of Independence (Mankoff, 2016).

It helped the parties to each other and was smooth relations until the end of World War II, and improved economic relations, which began in the early 1960s, and the signing of the 1984's. Russian gas swap deal for Turkish products began a period of tightening economic links (Hurriyet Daily News, 2010). In the 1990s, the two sides continued to have good relations economically despite the stark political differences (The Guardian, 2001). In Turkey, some security elites preferred to keep the country

from the European Union without antagonizing the United States looks forward to the cooperation with Russia and Iran (Radikal, 2002).

This view is informed at least partially Turkey's desire to become an energy hub. Within 10 years, the trade volume between the two countries rose seven times. Turkey has become the sixth largest trading partner of Russia, and Russia has become the second largest trading partner of Turkey. Cooperation in the field of energy that began in the 1980s deepened with the Blue Stream project in 1997 (Pinchuk and Astakhova, 2015). This brings Russian gas under the Black Sea to Turkey, culminating in 2010 when Turkey awarded a contract to build a nuclear reactor to Russia (The New York Times, 2010).

Cooperation has also increased in the energy field, flourished Turkish contractors in Russia, and lifted restrictions on visas. Relations reached a level of strategic partnership in the first meeting of the high-level cooperation, intergovernmental cooperation mechanism that lays the foundation for the partnership between the two countries. The meeting was held in 2010 in spite of tensions between Russia and the West in the wake of Moscow's invasion of Georgia in 2008, which drew sharp criticism from the United States and NATO (Hurriyet Daily News, 2011).

Turkey looked to a great extent in the past the Russian invasion in favour of energy and economic cooperation with Moscow. During this period, Turkey also became the first member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to buy weapons from the Russian Federation (Özel, 2016).

But on November 24, 2015, despite multiple warnings from air patrols Turkish, they were shot on the Russian SU-24 planes that had violated Turkish airspace for 17 seconds down by the Turkish F-16 fighter aircraft. The Russians denied they were ever in Turkish airspace, while confirmed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the Turkish version (Al-Jazeera, 2015).

According to Turkish sources, there repeated warnings for five minutes and that the Russians claimed they had not received Turkey and rules of engagement were well known to the Russians. They were rescued and one pilot by Russian Special Forces, but the Turkmen launched trained rebels and made by Turkey on the ground across the border in Syria, and some were killed as was parachuted from the plane (BBC, 2015). Turkish authorities immediately approached for NATO support, a move that

is claimed by the Russian army, made Russian President Vladimir Putin angry, who has called for dropping the plane "stab in the back" (Al-Jazeera, 2015).

The Turkish labour was prepared in advance, it was denied by the Turkish General Staff. After emphasize at the outset that the rules of engagement are clear, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed sorrow at the shooting it down and hope that the crisis can be solved. Russians measures were taken immediately; it appears that Moscow was ready for such an incident. The Russian government imposed economic sanctions that hit the Turkish trade, construction, tourism and exchanges that have benefited Turkey dramatically. Militarily, Russia announced that it will deploy S-400 missiles, the most advanced surface-to-air in Syria and continued to bomb Turkmen Brigades sites that Turkey organized and trained, supplied with weapons and money, and fully support in their fight against the Assad regime (Milliyet, 2015).

3.4.7 The relations between Turkey and Iran

Iran's neighbour Turkey, which shares a long border of 560 km, and without changing the nearly 400 years, bilateral relations and Turkish-Iranian evolve on the basis of the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, mutual respect and good neighbourliness. Efforts are underway to strengthen the political dialogue both on bilateral and regional issues through mutual visits and mechanisms such as the High-Level Cooperation Council and the joint committees in various sectors.

Turkish-Iranian Council, High Level Cooperation Council (HLCC), which was founded in 2014, has provided a structured basis of Turkish-Iranian relations, the first meeting of the HLCC in Ankara was held on June 9 2014 during a visit by Hassan Ruhani, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Turkey and second in the April 7, 2015 during the visit to Iran by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey. Finally, on the occasion of a visit Hassan Ruhani, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Turkey on April 16, 2016, it has realized the third meeting of the HLCC (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016).

Lastly, on the occasion of the visit of His Excellency Hassan Ruhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Turkey on 16 April 2016, the third encounter of the HLCC was realized. His Excellency Ahmet Davutoğlu, the then Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey of that time, upon the invitation of His Excellency Eshaq

Jahangiri Kouhshahi, First Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran paid a visit to Tehran on 4-5 March 2016. His Excellency Javad Zarif, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran visited Turkey on 19 March 2016 and His Excellency Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey visited Iran on 5 April 2016 in the event of the Turkey-Iran-Azerbaijan Trilateral Foreign Ministers Meeting.

Iran also has close ties with the Kurds, and provided them throughout history base to fight the former Baath regime, but they cannot provide what Turkey can give. Has undermined its nuclear ambitions and its support groups identified as terrorist organizations, and support of hostile Shi'ite militias of the Kurds (which clashed with the Peshmerga forces) and speech-led anti-Western, international prestige, also make it an ally economically weaker unreliable and unpredictable work (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016).

The partnership of Turkey, a military superpower, and a member of NATO and an ally of Western historically enjoyed a flexible economy to provide for the regional government a "buffer" zone of its own against the security structures in Iraq and the rest of the region. The government and non-governmental actors that threaten the regional government in the current political and security environment will think twice before challenging the interests of Turkey's security in Iraq, and so far, those interests overlap with the interests of the regional government. Regional government also benefit from increased foreign investment and technological expertise and openness to European markets. The constant interaction also contributes to easing tension in Turkey with other Kurdish groups in the region (NRT, 2015).

3.4.8 The relations between Iran and Northern Iraq

Iran as one of the significant neighbours with the northern region of Iraq, which has 513km border with the region a great role and relation with the region (Hama Kareem,2013, p. 90). Historically, Iran benefited from the Kurdish issue of the region to pressure the Iraqi government and Iran has dealt with this issue, also allied their political parties through "Qarargai Ramazan", a branch of Iran intelligence. Hence there are political and economic relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the regional government of Northern Iraq. The political construction of Iran during the periods of Islamic rule has always been as a Shi'a country, and since its

formation by Shah Ismael Safavid in 1501, Iran has always been trying to enlarge its hegemonic power, whether geographically or ideologically (Hama Kareem, 2013, pp. 87-118). Palani (2015) notes that 'Shi'a sectarianism' and uniting Iranian forces based on nationalistic principles are at the essential of the nation's foreign policy, particularly following the Islamic revolution. This is the same expansionism policy which Iran is using to further its nationalist goal in the whole region. Indeed, according to some sources, these ambitions have deeper historical roots. Argues that the regional isolation demonstrated by Iran is not a sudden move, as the factors behind it date "to a pre-Islamic era"; these factors include the Iran's claim over the region including the Euphrates and the Tigris, all the way to Yemen. They cite US interference in the region as justification of their own ambitions, which are further supported by their "historic claim to the region" (Farazi, 2015).

Iran's policy within Iraq, in the immediate aftermath of the Iraq operation in 2003, was pro-federalism. The Shi'as, along with the Kurds, worked on the federation of Iraq more than any other Iraqi component. The substance for this policy was the mistrust of the Iranians and the Shi'as of Iraq by the Americans. In a sense, if Iraq's new policies under the US opposed the wishes of the Shi'as, they would guarantee the southern portion of Iraq under the authority of their own region. Meanwhile, the Kurds were looking for partners in the new Iraq, on the basis of a self-ruling federation, under which they would share power in the central government. This was the case until the referendum of 2005 under the Iraqi constitution, which came with, what the Kurds considered a fair deal with regard to their affairs within Iraq. This included the disputed territories, dealt with in article 140 of the constitution.

Nonetheless, in the result of elections, the process of forming new government, that would include Shi'a parties, has historically been mediated by Iran, which has frequently requested the aid of the Kurdish political parties in this regard. Despite the promises that made by the government to the Kurds, however, they were often treated poorly once the new government was definitely established. For this reason, the Kurds began to question the attitude of Iran with regard to the Kurds and the Shi'a ruling in Iraq. Iran frequently turns a blind eye to the disagreement between the two parties in favour of strengthening the central government, under the guise of opposing sectarianism, as if Iran has no influence over policies towards the Kurdish

region. Ultimately, Iran must announce its position on the issues important to the region, particularly in reference to Iraq as an independent and non-sectarian state.

Iran has a great role in helping Kurds when they faced the danger of ISIS attack on the region. When ISIS first controlled one of the Iraqis major city Mosul, they were making a huge stride towards Baghdad, which was at one point considered by Iran to be its 'red line'. Soon later, ISIS shifted its advancement towards the Kurdish Region. During the same period, the grand Ayatullah Sistani issued a fatwa calling upon the Shi'as to practice jihad (legally sanctioned combat), which resulted in the creation of the Shi'a militant group 'Hashed Alshabi', which practices a politics of sectarianism. They also hoped to portray ISIS and its alleged barbarism as an example of violent Sunni Islam. At the same time, Iran was trying to embrace the region. For example, the threat to Erbil by ISIS gave Iran an opportunity to show its willingness, as the primary aid donor in the Region. Mehr News Agency (2015) quoted the region's Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani as stating "during the first stage, when ISIL invaded Iraqi Kurdish region, Iran was the first country to help us out". Further, during the liberation of the two Kurdish districts of Jalawla and Sa'diah, Iran was helping Peshmerga directly. In this regard, Kent (Rudaw, 2016) sheds light on the Iran's role in helping the Kurdish region in ISIS war as Iran has a significant influence over Kurdish region, which has been perceived politically as an ally of the West. The position once occupied by the West that of a military support for the Kurds has now been filled by Iran whose motivation lies largely in "exporting its revolution and challenging the West"; as the support from the West dwindles, Iran's influence becomes stronger and stronger.

However, the relation between two allies are seems good but sometimes a tension occurs because of the tough statements or threaten speeches of the Iranian side which leads to tension between them temporarily. The latest threat was from an Iranian military commander was released through his speech stating that Iran will destroy the region. A senior commander in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) recently threatened Israel, saying the ground is ready for the annihilation of "the Zionist regime". The comments by IRGC Deputy Commander Hossein Salami were made at a ceremony in Tehran prior to prayers marking Al-Quds Day. Salami also threatened Kurdish leaders in northern Iraq to keep their promises, saying that Iran

would "completely destroy any place that constitutes a threat to our regime" (Benari, 2016).

In response to this commander's threat statement, the regional government rejected his statements and announced that "they strongly reject his this inappropriate threat considering it as a stance that does not correspond to the old friendly relations between the Regional Government and the Islamic Republic of Iran, particularly at this time when friendly talks and dialogues, stressing mutual understanding, are conducted between the two sides. Sardar Salami's threat is incompatible with the spirit of these discussions. These threats do not serve our bilateral relations, and such language should not be used" (KRG, 2016). The northern region of Iraq considers its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran with significance and works to strengthen these relations in all spheres. In the framework of protecting the relations, the regional government reinforcing cooperation and the application of international law on the basis of good neighbourhood and continuous collaboration. Thus, the regional government insists on the peace and stability in the region for the interests the peoples of Iran and the entire region as well as emphasizing that the Kurdish regional's territory isn't a source of attacks inside the Iranian or any other neighbouring country's territory. Despite these situations, the relations between both sides are good and both allying against ISIS and fighting terrorism in Iraq and the entire region.

As for the contextual background of the economic connections linking the region with Iran, this relationship goes back to the international sanctions imposed on Iraq during the Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991. As a result of these sanctions, a chance arose to Iran by failing to act in accordance with the wishes of the international community; Iran was in a position to profit from the necessities of Iraq. Thus, on the one hand, Iran became an important gateway for the smuggling of goods into Iraq across Kurdish borders on both sides of Iraq and Iran. On the other hand, it received much of Iraq's wealth, cars, Lorries, bulldozers and miscellaneous machinery which, under the terms of the sanctions, were not in use anymore in Iraq. After 2003, these smuggling routes became known as formal border points between the Northern region and Iran, which are still in use today. Since then, the crude oil trade has been on-going via tankers, operating day and night transferring oil from the region into Iran, to Bandar Abbas (Mustafa, 2016, p. 4). In addition, many other import and

export activities between both sides have been ongoing, with Iranians been the prime receivers. Further, trade disputes which occur between Iranian and Kurdish businessmen always result in local authorities in the region. Yet, Iran's economic ambitions in the region are still not fulfilled, as they wish to overtake Turkey as the prime beneficiary.

Thus, they try to attract both Iraqi central government and the regional government to improve their economic relations upon the oil trade by exporting through Iran's ports. As in 2015, the Kurdish regional government and Tehran agreed to set up a pipeline to export Kurdish oil through Iran, but the proposal had not been implemented. The agreement was meant to be signed in May 2016 but the regional government was resisting making the final commitment, it was reported in the summer of 2016. Iraqi government's spokesman Ali Al-Dabbagh speculated that Erbil was hesitant to sign because they have a 50-year deal with Turkey. In mid-2016, an Iranian official in the region revealed that Baghdad had not yet endorsed the plan (Rudaw, 2017).

It is worth to say that, the government of the northern Iraq interested more on its relations with Turkey than Iran because Turkey is the central gate between the region and west countries of the world. As well as, the region's ally with USA is another reason to strengthen its relations with Turkey rather than Iran, as it is obvious that Iran is the most significant ally to Russia which is the most competitive country politically and economically in the world.

In short, Iran has an important political impact over the region, which is necessary to its existence. Due to the majority Sunni demographic of the Kurdish people and the relative strength of the Islamic is developing in the region. This awakening is represented by a 17% share of Islamists in the Parliament, ever-increasing presence of the Salafi, and the high percentage of adherents to Sunni Islam among the Kurdish population in the region; Iran has little or no ideological influence on the region at all. It is important to note that under the current geopolitical system and in light of the advancement of the position of the region due to its opposition to ISIS and its natural resources, Iran is reconsidering the region. Furthermore, it is likely to change its politics towards the region as this process continues. Iran understands that, with Turkey as a key ally and, with the prospective support of the Arab states and with the deepening identification of Kurds as Sunnis, Kurds will survive without Iran's

support. Therefore, in recent years, Iran has been looking for friendly relations with the region, and has expressed a desire for more economic interaction with the Kurdish region similar to the way in which Turkey works with the region (Rudaw, 2016).

3.5 The North of Iraq's referendum

3.5.1 Theme of referendum in North of Iraq

Democracy can be defined as a “system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives”, this means that democracy provides everyone with an opportunity to raise their voice and beliefs without fear. In 2014 a referendum plan was held, amidst controversy and dispute between the regional and federal government (BBC, 2014). The referendum was an ounce and delayed on several occasions, as Kurdish forces cooperated with the Iraqi central Government for the liberation of Mosul, (GUTMAN, R., 2014). However, a practical referendum was held in April 2017 (Rudaw, 2017).

On 7 June 2017, Kurdish president Masoud Barzani held a meeting with the Kurdish democrat party (KDP), the patriotic Union of Kurds (PUK), and the ruling parties, where the independence referendum was confirmed to be held on 25 September 2017, (Rudaw, 2017).

On Monday 25th September, people in Northern Iraq voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence in a non-binding referendum that was aimed at arming Masoud Barzani with territorial bargaining chips. The outcome of the results illustrated that

93 per cent voted in favour of independence, with 7.3 per cent voting against. More than 3.3 million people or 72 per cent of eligible voters took part in Monday's ballot, further proven by the electoral commission (Mckernan, 2017).

Table 3.1: The results of independence referendum in Northern Iraq, The independent High Elections and Referendum Commission

	Vote	%
Yes	2,861,471	92.73%
No	224,464	7.27%
Valid votes	3,085,933	93.35%
Invalid or blank votes	219,990	6.65%
Total votes	3,305,925	100.00%
Registered voters Turnout	4,581,225	72.16%

Source: Mckernan, B. (2017). Kurdish referendum results: 93% of Iraqi Kurds vote for independence, say reports, Beirut, 27 September 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/kurdish-referendum-results-vote-yes-iraqi-kurds-independence-iran-syria-a7970241.htm>

However in the lead up to the vote, all suggestions of secession by the Kurds was bitterly opposed by the government in Baghdad, as well as by neighbours such as Turkey and Iran who threatened to isolate the region — the United States also pressed Kurdish leaders to call off the poll. This was because USA wanted to disperse all ISIS in the Iraqi region, hence they claimed that the referendum will cause further disputes between the Kurdish and Iraqi government and it surely did. The notion of referendum led to a severe political controversy as the Iraqi politicians asserted that they will refuse to have a dialogue about the referendum outcome, further proven by Iraqi Prime Minister, Mr Abadi who stated, "If they want to start talks, they must cancel the referendum and its outcome."

Hence it is accurate and undeniable to claim that the Kurdish Referendum led to a severe political controversy in the Middle East. This point can be proven by reactions prior and after the referendum from many politicians. Prior the referendum the Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi demanded that Kurdish authorities must "cancel" the outcome of the independence referendum in northern Iraq or else they will experience the consequences of what is rapidly escalating into a major regional crisis. Mr Abadi alerted that the referendum was unconstitutional as Parliament urged the Iraqi central Government to send troops to take control of pivotal oil fields held by Kurdish forces and called on all foreign governments to close their diplomatic missions in Erbil.

During the Iraqi parliament gathering Abadi clarified that President Masoud Barzani must hand over control of the regions' international airports or face a travel ban on

flights to the Kurdish region. Abadis words became into actions and international airlines suspended flights to Kurdish airports.

In the last few years north of Iraq aimed to get success in many critical cases, such as ISIS attacks, random homeless coming, economical case not sending budget central government of Iraq. Al though north of Iraq has borders with ISIS and fighter with them it was safer than Europe countries. Beside of the Arab, Kurds has shown the best sample of tolerance.

Hence many people suggest that Kurds and other citizens in north of Iraq deserve to live in an independent country, as they believe that they have a nation with a clear future. Also, many argue that it is difficult for the Kurds to settle in to different cultures because they have had their proud culture for many years. Hence many Kurds believe that if democracy does exist then why can't they accomplish independence? Is it because of political gains for the surround countries? These are the question which lies in many people's mind.

In the last 25 to 30 years about 30 countries declared their independence, Soviet Union had been parted into 15 countries, Yugoslavia has been divided, Czechoslovakia become a free country, Eritrea got its freedom, south of Sudan a parted from Sudan after a referendum, East Timor who has fighter against, Indonesia got its freedom too, Palestine got statue of observed state in UN and Northern Cyprus was recognized by Turkey as independent state (Gli, 2018, pp. 44-49).

These states have all accomplished independence without any political, economic or social threat around the world. In the case of Kurdish region where the Iraqi government says that Iraq must stay together as a whole and Iraqi government refuse the idea of a different Kurdish state.

3.5.2 Turkey's attitude about North of Iraq's referendum

Soon after in dictating the date of execution of referendum the regional states started stopping a giant it each one of them on its way expressed their opinion against it. Turkey expressed their attitude after an argent meeting of national Security Council of Turkey heading by Erdoğan, the President of the Turkish Republic established a non-agreed declaration containing the referendum in North of Iraq which excites in, and in declaration the then Turkish Prime Minister of Turkey Binali Yildirim about

that topic said that: "it doesn't make stability and it doesn't cause wars in the area"(Xor, 2017).

Turkey's meetings declarations continued, but it doesn't indicate a rough attitude and none accept able situation which given the result that. Turkey doesn't impose economical because the volume of trade between Turkey and north of Iraq increases annually. Turkey exports its products which is about 8 billion dollars to north of Iraq while its only 4 million dollars with Iraq (Anwar, 2018, pp. 196-198).

Turkish products are imported to Iraq through north of Iraq which we can say it works as a transit line between Baghdad and Ankara for tradition transactions. North of Iraq is the second importer from Turkey after Germany if Turkey closes its borders with it, will hermits' budget now days their lotions between them started over after a period of standing (Anwar, 2018, pp. 195-198).

To conclude, it's clear that the Kurdish referendum lead to a political outcry due to all the surrounding countries opposing the notion. As I discussed earlier many people view the outcome and the consequences of the referendum as an unfair strategy which aimed to lower the values of the Kurds further proven by the lack of support of the surrounding countries.

4. ENERGY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND NORTHERN IRAQ

4.1 The beginnings of energy relations

The large energy resource of Iraqis regarded as a part of Iraq-Turkey relations. The fact that Kirkuk province is located in the heart of Iraq, and more interestingly it was well-known for Iraq's largest oil and gas territory but has been extremely exploited ever since its discovery in the 1920s and export in 1935. Iraq relied on Kirkuk's oil up to 1960. After that further oil fields were found which made Iraq to focus less on Kirkuk, the province was ignored even more when conflicts and sanctions occurred. It nevertheless continues to hold considerable reserves; the federal Iraqi government controls the twin pipelines that transport oil from Kirkuk to the Turkish Mediterranean port at Ceyhan (Qubad 2014, p. 4).

The economy of Northern Iraq has developed at the end of Iraqi government power. Before the Kurdish government, there was a program called the oil in opposition to Food. The program was led by UN. Furthermore, Northern region of Iraq's economy was developed very well. It was in a way that a part of the oil's outcome had to be given to the Northern Iraq (Park 2005, p. 90).

From the first time that the Kurdish government has announced, it has always been trying to develop the relations with Turkey. Even though there were some political conflicts in the period, economic effort and business did not stop growing. Actually, it was posted by oil in opposition to food program. This program was first used by the American government against Iraqi government as an economic penalty from 1996 to 2003. After those economic penalties were removed from the Iraqi government, the business between Turkey and Northern Iraq increased on Khabur border (Jamestown Foundation 2008, p. 55).

Even though there were many associations between Turkey and Northern Iraq before Iraqi freedom. Northern Iraq started a new stage in its economic relationships. Especially, oil and gas made a great enhancement in between. For this reason, it will deeply talk about oil and gas in this chapter Iraq in terms of politics, geography and economy. In this piece, oil will be evaluated mainly.

4.1.1 Investment and business

The leadership of modern Turkey has historically viewed its relations with the Iraqi Kurds through a traditional security lens. The prospect of a Kurdish nation the Northern Iraq emerging as an autonomous region within Iraq and possibly an independent state was viewed as an existential threat to the unitary nature of the Republic of Turkey (Park, 2005).

The creation of a liberal business and investment climate aimed at the international private sector, coupled with the entrepreneurial spirit of the Turkish private sector and the normalization of relations between Ankara and Erbil, resulted in significant economic cooperation, unthinkable a decade ago (Görener, 2008).

Furthermore, the close proximity of the Northern Iraq market, consumer demand for new goods, and the trans-border mercantile culture of companies in Turkey and the Northern Iraq contributed to the rapid expansion of economic interdependence between Ankara and Erbil (Olson 2006, pp. 13-45).

Due to the visa-free regime for Turkish citizens who wished to stay in the Northern Iraq for under 15 days, Turkish companies were able to send workers of all skill levels to the Northern Iraq without fore planning, without completing any government paperwork, and at a relatively low cost, Turkish companies that wanted their employees to stay in the Northern Iraq simply applied for either a short or long term residency permit. It is obvious that Turkey is considering as an important state in the Middle East because of its position and role in the region has a big economic and political relations with Northern Iraq and this makes European countries and US's eyes to be on them regarding the developments in the region. It is a factor of transporting and exporting Northern Iraq oil to west through Turkey. After overthrow of Saddam Regime in 2003, a new phase started in Iraq, this was taken place after organizing new parliament and a new government which was containing all parties and nations in Iraq, when soon troubles occurred between all of them. The more important one was the Kurds and the Iraqi government whom called (Erbil-Baghdad) case. Problems were complicated in such a way that regional government decided to export and sell its oil without returning to Baghdad through Turkey to the world, which is allowed in Iraqi constitution. Problems between Erbil and Baghdad increased the relation between Turkey and Northern Iraq in a rate that traditional

exchanging between them is estimated 10 milliards in a year. Turkey's opening process with peace process was perceived as a new grade, politicians viewed it as a half way to reach the complete treatment (Rudaw, 2015).

Progress in economic relations between Turkey & Northern Iraq was an effect to progress in economics of both, and this is from these large number Turkish companies who are working in Northern Iraq. According to a Northern Iraq statistics there are 2955 foreign companies working in Northern Iraq, 1329 of them are Turkish which contains most of them, a number of lubbers got jobs either inside Northern Iraq or in Turkey, which became a factor for a good economical living rate in Turkey and Northern Iraq (KRG, 2014).

Table 4.1: Turkish companies operating in Iraq including Northern Iraq

Year	Turkish companies in Northern Iraq
2009	485
2010	730
2012	1,023
2013	1,500

Source: Fidan, B. (2016). "Turkish Business in Northern Iraq", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol. 14, No. 4, p. 121.

In 2010, an estimated 25,000 Turkish workers were operating in the Northern Iraq followed by approximately 30,000 Turkish citizens in 2012. Sinan Çelebi, Northern Iraq Minister of Trade and Industry, during his April 2012 visit to Turkey, pointed out that 25 new Turkish companies entered the Northern Iraq every month and those Turkish companies comprised more than half of all foreign companies registered by the Northern Iraq (Ekofinans, 2012). Pre-crisis, in 2013, there were approximately 1,500 Turkish companies operating in the Northern Iraq (Investin Group, 2013).

Now, it is difficult to measure exactly how many Turkish companies are engaged in the region as many have temporarily ceased operations with the intention of re-launching their activities once the security environment and the economy have stabilized. According to Turkey's Trade Ministry, the Turkish-Iraqi trade relationship

amounted to about 940 million dollars prior to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Oğuş and Erbil 2005, pp. 1-11).

With the end of the United Nations (UN) economic sanctions and Saddam Hussein's internal embargo, Turkish manufactures and exporters were able to capitalize on low-transportation costs to the Northern Iraq increased stability, familiar cultural reference points, a growing commercial infrastructure, and the demand for reasonably priced high-quality goods by the burgeoning Kurdish middle-class. Turkish companies rapidly expanded their share of the market and supplied roughly 80 percent of Iraqi Kurdish consumer imports including furniture, food products, and textiles (Turunç 2011, pp. 40-44).

It quickly became evident that the commercial relationship between Ankara-Erbil-Baghdad was more favourable to Turkey's economic growth because without oil and gas, exports from Iraq including the Northern Iraq to Turkey were insignificant, ranging from 87 million dollars to 153 million dollars between 2007 and 2014 (Cagaptay et al, 2015).

From 2014 to 2015, the economic and humanitarian crises have a significant impact on the economy of the regional government, which contracted by up to 5 percent. The poverty rate more than doubled, from 3.5 percent to 8.1 percent (Kulaksız 2015, p. 2).

Installation costs - additional spending needed to restore the welfare of the population of the regional government of the influx of displaced people and refugees - estimated to be about \$ 1.4 billion, or 5.6 percent of GDP is the oil in the regional government (Karasapan and Kulaksız, 2015). Recently, also it increased the number of people who migrate from regional government to escape from the economic crisis and increasing political pressure on opposition voices.

Turkish companies not only exported goods to the Northern Iraq, but they utilized the warehouse and transfer infrastructure in the region to store goods before transporting them to other Iraqi governorates or on to Iran, Kuwait, and Syria.

Table 4.2: Turkish exports to Iraq with estimated exports to Northern Iraq

Year	Exports to Iraq	Northern Iraq's Estimated Share	Estimated Exports to Northern Iraq
2007	\$2,844,767,091	50%	\$1,422,383,546
2011	\$8,310,129,576	61%	\$5,060,868,912
2013	\$11,948,905,271	67%	\$8,029,664,342

Source: Cagaptay, S., and T. Evans, “Turkey and the KRG: An Undeclared Economic Commonwealth”, 2012, www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis

4.2 Energy resources

There are many in energy resources in Northern Iraq. They are actually minerals and the wealth under the ground. Northern Iraq has only used oil, gas, and somehow minerals.

4.2.1 Oil and gas

Crude oil is a naturally occurring, unrefined petroleum product composed of hydrocarbon deposits and other organic materials. Crude oil can be refined to produce usable products such as gasoline, diesel and various forms of petrochemicals. It is a non-renewable resource, also known as a fossil fuel, which means that it cannot be replaced naturally at the rate it is consumed and is, therefore, a limited resource.

It has a bad flavour and it is mainly a complex mixture of chemical matters of carbon and hydrogen. Furthermore, smell bad. Moreover, the ratio of oil containers changes according to locations. There are also different hypotheses about matters that compose oil. The most preferred one is the one which claims oil is created from trash and waste of plants and creatures in the oceans. It also claimed those hundred million years ago, these creatures had died and stayed at very low branches of the seas. In a time that most of this earth have been just water, the enormous heat levels that come from the nerve of the earth and the pressure of water made these matters go deeply into the earth. After that, they stayed at a level which was harder. In addition, the matters then changed to oil. There are some directories about this hypothesis in Iraq. Parenthetically, this hypothesis really fits with the oil that Iraq owns.

Just like water, soil, and minerals, oil is a national resource too. The point that differ it from other resources is that oil is a limited amount of the ground. It will someday, of course, get to the end and there will be no more oil. For this reason, the outcomes of oil must be used to develop agriculture, industries, pastoralist, healthcare, tourism, and other fields that benefit all of the citizens. The tie between oil and national security has two important points in it. Firstly, oil and natural gas have been the greatest and cheapest resource for industrial fields, and it is the best tool for heating and making vehicles move such as cars, planes, and ships. Secondly, this importance of oil has made it the greatest factor in political and militant conflicts among countries in the world. This is the reason why sometimes, oil from a country causes wars and conflicts in the country instead of happiness and peace.

Producing oil in a country causes a great economic developments and happy peaceful life for its citizens. It can convert deserts to civilizations, as the deserts of the Arabian Gulf countries such as UAE (United Arab Emirates), Qatar, and Kuwait. In fact, their production of oil has changed the entire life of their citizens. Furthermore, it has converted deserts into modern cities. On the other hand, some deserts that do not produce oil have been a place for poor people, hunger, and spreading different kinds of diseases, as it has been seen in; Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, and other countries in southern Africa. Any country that produces oil, other countries give a special care and make relations with the produced oil countries to have an external communications of diplomatic and political changes to the highest levels of relations. In a way, most of the western countries will keep an eye open on these countries because of their wealth. Also, these economic benefits have caused to protect those countries. For example, in 1990, the western world really stood with Kuwait and did not let Saddam to read it. This means that if a country produced oil, that country will have protection (Barham, 2014).

Another problem of oil is that most of the countries “that have oil live a lazy life like in the examples in the Arabian Gulf. This is all because of the laziness of people and government even. Only in Makkah city, nearly six thousand foreign labourers work on the streets and clean the roads. Citizens are very lazy on a level that they don't accept to work and clean their own streets” (Barham, 2014).

If oil was treated in a good way, it could have served everyone very well. Producing and selling oil can't be given to one specific party or person. Instead, it must be

treated as a national case. In order to change the danger to safety and peace, the outcomes of this national resource must be used in a precise way (Darhela, 2016).

Activities and productivity are in fields of oil and gas count as one of the threats to nature in the world, the negative effects change according to different areas that produce oil. Having these negative points depends on the environment of the location to produce oil, type of the soil, having water resources, and forests. Also, governments and operating companies have different important roles in using nature loving tools. Finally, it can be said that the ratio of destroying nature will be decreased. There should be plans before starting any nature related activities. After that, there must be a problem fixing. It is said that "hurt the nature, then try to protect it". At the same time, principal saved claim "do not hurt the nature, if so; it must be fixed". This means that our nature needs to be protected in order not to be hurt. Because they feel danger the oil and gas activities make.

Oil and gas laws of Northern Iraq ask to treat the case as that is needed. From having protection and fixing strategies to creating the nature help box at the same time. As they are responsible for the case, Ministry of Natural Resources opened the department of Health Care in Natural safety even the department is not active, still, no one knows where does the whole box is the outcome go. Also, there's no clear strategy for nature safety in the ministry. As a matter of fact, ministries being Careless in the field of nature have made oil and gas companies kind of irresponsible for nature. Also, there is no clear strategy for nature safety in the ministry, from throwing away oil and burning gas to putting away industrial garbage in oil producing areas, also small refiners using harmful tools to produce oil and putting away oil's compost in an immature way without referring to scientific manners.

The big danger is more effective in forests, rivers, and streams. Oil companies harm the nature while searching for crude oil, producing oil and gas, and refined. They harm the nature in a tough way. For example, cutting thousands of trees by Hess Company from the US in Shaqlawa area also, they thrower oil and its derivatives into streams and rivers (Darhela, 2016).

It can be argued that nature of the companies is not a favour. This must be treated as an obligation of these companies. They harm the nature; instead, they have to pay back. As it is mentioned above, it is a law that foreign companies muse's care about

Northern Iraq nature. But the problem is that there is no penalty for companies that break the laws. This has made the companies very careless about the nature of this region.

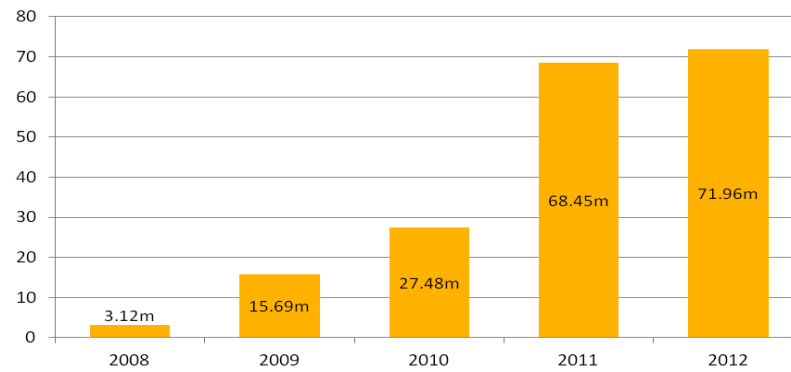
Therefore, it is significant that oil and gas companies must be supported to save our nature. Also, oil contracts must be revised. There should be penalties for those that harm the nature. Lawbreakers and their penalties must be clearly mentioned in the contracts that Northern Iraq makes with other companies (Darhela, 2016).

It can be the companies of oil and gas just keep on working with irresponsibility about Northern Iraq nature, so it will be a huge danger for the future. It might need to use more money to rebuild the environment and help nature than the amount which has earned from producing oil.

Northern Iraq owns too much oil and gas. It is measured to be around 45 billion (approximately $7.2 \times 10^9 \text{ m}^3$) (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013). For this reason, Northern Iraq is considered to be the number six country in the global rank for countries having oil and gas. Oil production in Northern Iraq started in the middle of 2007. This happens after that Kurds could recover lands that were raided by the Iraqi government in Kirkuk and Mosul. The Kurdish government has announced for oil and gas companies come and start working in 40 oil fields. People hope the oil production ratio will increase to five times more than today's production, which is about 1 million barrel per day (160000 m^3) (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013).

At the end of 2011, ExxonMobil Company encountered Iraqi central government by signing some contracts with Northern region's government to search for oil and gas in six fields in the region. One of the contracts was searching for oil and gas in the districts in the east of Kirkuk city which have conflict between Iraqi central government and regional government. They started to work in Northern Iraq, in the Northern Iraq they have many owns an underground like gas too, It is more than $2,800 \text{ m}^3$ (General Board of Tourism, 2015).

The companies that are working in Northern Iraq in fields of searching, and producing oil are Exxon Mobil, Total Chevron, Talisman energy, Russian Gazprom, Genel Energy, Hunt Oil, Gulf Custom Petroleum, Marathon oil and Dana Gas (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013).



Figures 4.1: Oil productions in Northern Iraq, Millions of barrels in 2008-2012

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources (2013). Oil, <http://mnr.krg.org/index.php/ku/oil-ku/vision>

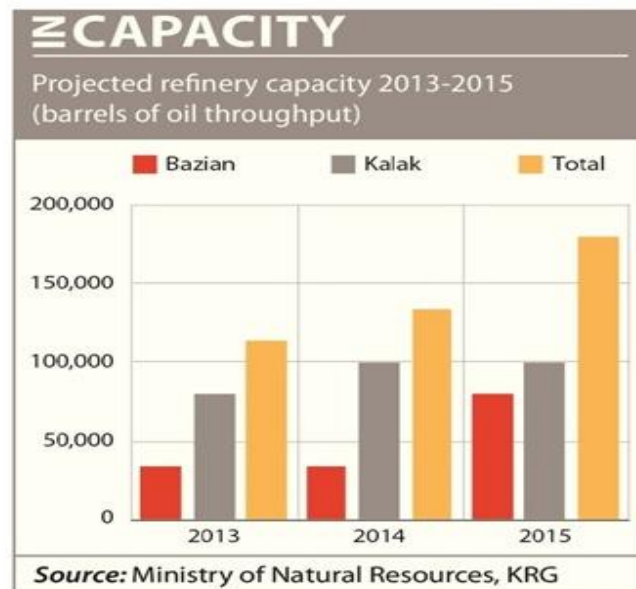


Figure 4.2: Projected refinery capacity 2013-2015

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources (2016). Projected refinery capacity 2013-2015, <http://mnr.krg.org/index.php/ku/downstream-ku/refining-ku>

4.2.2 Minerals

Northern Iraq has many different types of minerals and its lands. These minerals haven't gotten enough care as oil and gas. The types that have been found in Northern Iraq are mainly sulphur rocks. The biggest resource of this mineral has been found in Southern Erbil. Besides sulphur rocks, there are other minerals such as iron, coal, copper, gold, which is used to create cement etc. (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013).

4.3 Impact of oil and gas in Northern Iraq on relations with Turkey

Oil and gas industry does not have a long history in Northern Iraq. It refers to the period after Iraqi freedom. Even though the first oil contract turns back to 2002, but the rapid increase in the field and accepting a part of the Iraqi Constitution about Northern Iraq oil and gas have delayed the initiation to 2007 (Fatah 2014, p. 6).

They said that oil has divided Kurds and today, some people say that oil will gather Kurds together again, meaning Turkey and Northern Iraq to have one politician destiny. Also, Nabokov project ties Turks and Kurds together, too. Nabokov is the transportation of natural oil and gas from Azerbaijan to Europe. This line is known as Bako flies-Cihan (Rozha 2011, p. 10). After that, Kurds could make a federal government in 2003. This was a result of the revolution in 1991 that Kurdish people made against the Iraqi government. Producing and exporting oil was an old dream of Kurdish people. After years of waiting and working on the project, Northern Iraq exporting oil started after it was officially announced in a conference in Hawler. It was a great beginning to oil business for Northern Iraq and Turkey (CNN, 2009). As it was predicted, Iraqi government stood against the project and did not agree. Also, Iraqi government's disagreement is against the Iraqi Constitution Article 122. It is mentioned in the Article that the Ministry of Natural Resources of Northern Iraq is responsible for Northern Iraq oil and gas business. Iraqi government started to give penalties to a Kurdish government after these actions. Also, Iraqi government stopped sending the Kurdish budget, which was 17% of the whole Iraqi budget for 2013 since now. It had made negative effects on Northern Iraq economy till now. Even though Northern Iraq is legally doing its business from Turkey, but it cannot solve the economic crisis by itself. According to official statistics, 3955 foreign companies work in Northern Iraq. Most of them are from Turkey. Turkish companies are nearly 1329 companies. Northern Iraq is secure and protected, so international companies come and start working in the region (KRG, 2014).

This is the reason why Turkey is considered as one of the most important countries for Northern Iraq oil and gas business. Fortunately, the relationships have really developed. Every day, Northern Iraq exports 600,000 barrel of oil, which means 18 million barrel per month. Also, Northern Iraq is planning to send approximately 20 billion m³ of gas in 2016-2018 with Genel Energy companies. It is, of course, a great achievement for both sides (Rudaw, 2015).



Figure 4.3: The battle over Kurdish exports-pipeline from the Taq Taq oil field

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources (2013). Gas pipeline, <http://mnr.krg.org/index.php/ku/gas-ku/pipeline>

4.4 Current challenges

While Northern Iraq is developing in many ways, it has always divided the outcomes with the Iraqi government and people. The strategy of not burning gas has made Northern Iraq use all of its gas to produce electricity. This will give Northern Iraq the greatest electricity power comparable to enter Iraq. In 2007, Northern Iraq was able to produce 482MW and it is possible to add another 3GW in a near future (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013). This extra energy might make Northern Iraq give electricity to other regions or cities of Iraq. Northern Iraq strongly believes that hydro carbonic resources and energy producing must advantage all of Iraq. Also, it must be used to rebuild the country. As it is mentioned in the Iraqi Constitution in 2005, approximately 1.5 billion dollars have been used for producing electricity (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013). While most of the powerhouses of Northern Iraq depend on small gas turbines that can be fired by gas and diesel, Kurdish government always planned to build stations that need gas to work. This is because they are faster and better. They use the gas that is produced in Khormor, Khormala, and some other farms. This has led to having a good program for electricity, which can develop in a very short time. Furthermore, with gas producing house's program getting greater, more power will gain gas by the new system that Northern Iraq follows (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013).

In 2009, Northern Iraq decided to start selling Northern Iraqi's oil by its own authority and without referring to Baghdad. It was the first time when Masoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani both launched the oil pipes in a formal ceremony in Erbil. According to episodes 111, 112, and 141 of Iraqi constitution, Northern Iraq is

totally liberated to treat with the oil case. Exporting oil is defined as a remarkable phase in Kurdish history regarding some experts who passed judgments on the accomplishment as a mistake. Exporting oil has benefits to Kurds in a quantity of means. In the internal side, oil production can be used as a reason to stop the petroleum crises in Northern Iraq. Also, it has changed Northern Iraq to a stronger authority in the political game in Iraq. In the international side too, it affects the world to convince that Northern Iraq is a real economic, political, and national power in the area. Even though the outcomes of this oil exporting goes to Baghdad, but it did not have any effect on increasing Northern Iraq budget, but it was the reason to make a lot more arguments between Erbil and Baghdad (Rashid, 1980).

Iraqi crisis increase every day, and continuous meetings and assemblies have not been able to solve the problems. As it was said, the Erbil agreement after the 2010 election had solved the issues in Iraq. After having these problems for a longer period of time, Iraq could not continue like that, so Baghdad decided to stop sending the Kurdish budget. The budget was 17% of the whole Iraqi budget. In addition, Baghdad have had diminished the budget to 10.6% from 2010. After 18 months of resisting, Northern Iraq economic problem changed to the “economic crises in the north” (Rudaw, 2015).

The reasons of region’s economic crises are listed below:

- Iraq: Baghdad is considered as a main cause of Northern Iraq crises especially after 2003, when Northern Iraq was claiming to own every part of “Northern parts out of region”. Iraq did not agree that Northern Iraq can sign agreements with international companies. Indeed, region has to refer to “Somo” company which is a local Iraqi company. After a series of meetings they decided that Northern Iraq has to export 550,000 BP per a day to Baghdad, and Baghdad will send the Kurdish budget. Eventually, they did not follow those instructions with no clear reason. As a result, Northern Iraq is keeping on without any budget from central government.
- ISIS: It is another essential reason of Northern Iraq crises. After that conflicts and arguments started between Erbil and Baghdad, ISIS started attacking Northern Iraq borders. This caused Kurdish government to spend too much money for the war consumption. Even though

international countries helped Northern Iraq by sending weapons and helping Peshmerga forces, but it was not enough.

- Refugees: According to formal statistics, Northern Iraq has accepted more than 901,320 refugees from all the parts of Iraq until the end of December 2015. This happened after that ISIS took over Mosul and some other cities in southern Iraq. Many people from southern Iraq came to Northern Iraq. Northern Iraq, of course, accepted them and gave them all the available and possible services and helps. Northern Iraq offered camps and other types of services to them. Some of them settled inside the cities, and some others outside of the cities. Also, many other refugees from Syria have come to Northern Iraq. According to numbers and statistics, approximately 1,500,000 refugees are in Northern Iraq (KDP, 2016).

All these reasons affect the life of residents in the North region of Iraq financially. Also the government can't work properly because most of the employees are not going to their works because the government does not have enough money to pay their salaries. However, the Northern Iraq is still working on finding a way to solve its financial crisis but the problem is not properly solved yet. According to the economic and sea-communications resources, Northern Iraq has targeted the Northern West of the European oil market, which is known as Baltic area. And Reuters has stated that Northern Iraq's oil is racing the Russian oil, and has been a reason for having extra oil in the area. Also, those financial resources have claimed that at least 3 petroleum tanker ships arrived the Dansik in Poland, and Burting in Lithuania. According to the resources, that was the first time when Northern Iraq's oil has reached Europe. On Tuesday January 17th, the minister of the natural resources of Northern Iraq's government has claimed, "Northern Iraq's oil customers have increased to 10 countries". Sending Northern Iraq's oil to Europe is a sign for supporting a fight between Russia and OPEC oil producers because the European market has been recharging only by Russia for a long time. According to the same resource, Sikinos petroleum tanker ship has arrived Gdansk Gulf in Baltic Sea in nova. The greatest oil company of Poland that is known as PKN said that they are always waiting for new people to buy oil from and Northern Iraq would be a good customer an express from JBS energy says that the competition between the types of oil have created a new strategy in the oil market (Rudaw, 2015).



Figure 4.4: Oil pipeline project between Turkey and Northern Iraq

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources (2013), Oil pipeline, <http://mnr.krg.org/index.php/ku/oil-ku/oil-pipeline>



Figure 4.5: Oil tanker United Kalavyrta in Texas

Source: Cron, J. et al. (2014). Kurdish oil disappeared radar Texas coast reappears, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2740111/Kurdish-oil-tanker-disappeared-radar-Texas-coast-REAPPEARS.html>

Most of the crude oil in Northern Iraq is from the huge oil pool under Iraq's lands. And a great part of that huge oil pool is located in Northern Iraq. Also, there are many oil and gas stations in different parts of the region. Most of these oil farms have directions through Northern West and Southern East. Plus, crude oil is coming out from the ground just like a water eye in Mandali, Duzkhurmatu, Babagurgur, and Tawki. Crude oil is also available in Northern Iraq's border with Iran, Turkey, and Syria but in less quantity. Examples for this one are Qandil, Bekhma, GaliQirk, Shekhan, and Maqlub. Because of the special creation of the geological side of its land, there are many places in Northern Iraq they have crude oil mixed with underground water. One good thing about oil in this region is that the oil is near the surface of the ground. Also, its amount is quite enough that reaches approximately 53

billion barrels (Ministry of Natural Resources, 2013). (Without Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Northern East of Mosul). In short, the oil farms in Northern Iraq can be divided into three parts. First one is North (Duhok). This part is located in Northern Iraq. It includes all the oil farms that are located inside the borders of Duhok city. A very big portion of Northern Iraq's oil is situated in this part. The oil farms of this part are Tawki, Atrush, Shekhan, AgriBijil, Duhok, ShekhAdi, Bardarash, Sarsang, and Ruvi. The oil wells in these areas are between 1000 to 3000 meters which shows the low cost of building new wells. Geographically, these oil wells have a strategic position for exporting oil to Turkey and Europe. It is expected that, of course, there are more than 25 billion barrels of oil in this part which is 48% of all the oil of Northern Iraq. And the quality rate of the oil in this part is between 18 to 39 AP. Second East (Sulaimani-Halabja-Garmian), It contains all the areas that are located in the Northern east of Iraq. Also, this section is for all the oil farms that are from Suleimani, Halabja, and Garmian. Comparing with North, oil farms of this section are smaller in size and deeper for about 2500 to 5000 meters. Most important oil farms of this area are Garmian, Bazian, Qaradakh, Miran, Shakil, and Sarqalah. The oil amounts in these areas are predicted to be around 18.2 billion barrels which is 32% of the whole oil of Northern Iraq. Most importantly, the quality of the oil of this section is better which 35 to 44 API is (Samad 2015, pp. 81-104). Third South Section (Erbil) This section is located in south of Northern Iraq. It contains all the oil farms that are situated in the authority area of Erbil Governorate. The oil farms of this section are located randomly in the geographic site of Hawler. Some are in east and north, and some others are in west and south. Taq Taq, Khurmala, Bnbawi, Sarta, Erbil Demirtagh, Bistora and Binin. The amount of the predicted oil in this area is about 9.7 billion barrels which is 18% of the whole oil of Northern Iraq. The quality of the oil in this area is quite different among the oil farms from 19 to 44 API and the depth of the oil wells are between 2000 to 3500 meters (Samad 2015, pp. 81-104).

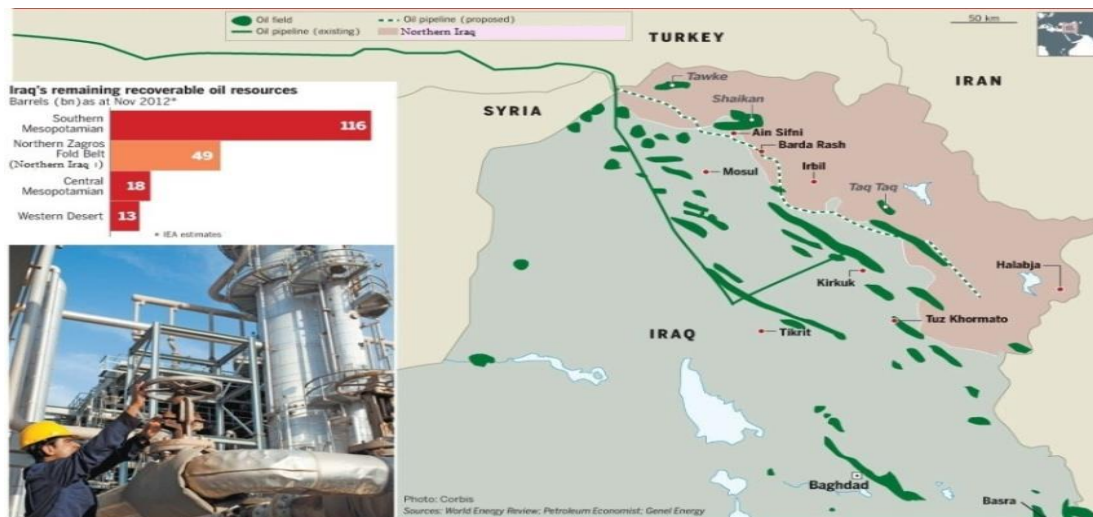


Figure 4.6: Northern Iraq reserves

Source: Financial Times (2012). Iraq's main recoverable oil resources, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8d15816c-4929-11e2-9225-00144feab49a.html#axzz4IBQuILUy>

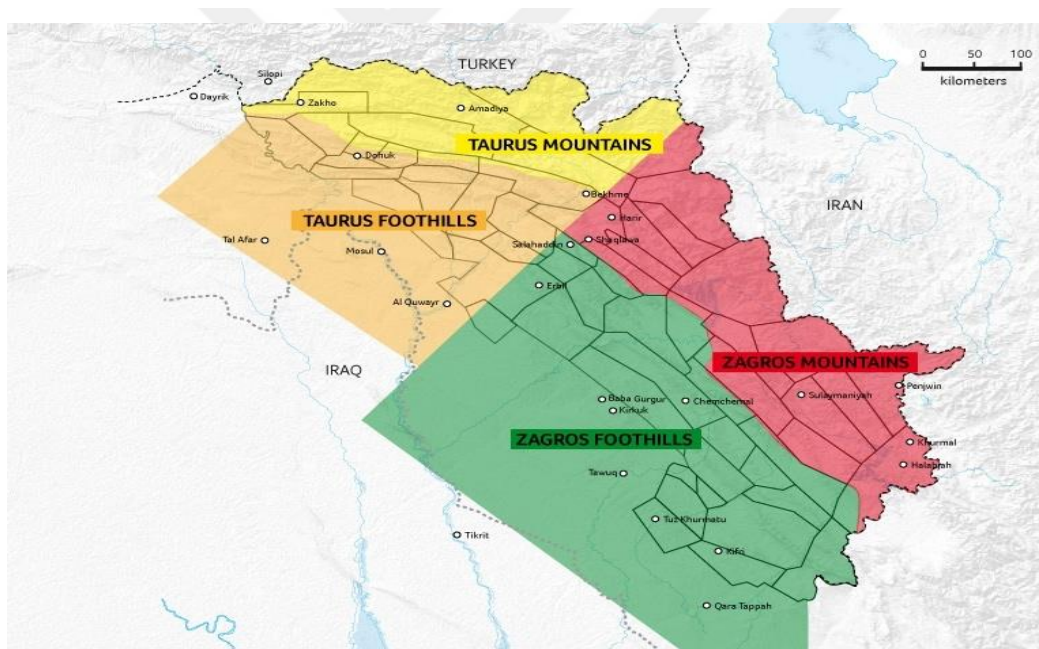


Figure 4.7: Structural domains

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources, Licenses & Energy Infrastructure, 2013, http://mnr.krg.org/images/maps/STRUCTURAL_DOMAIN_MAP.jpg

According to the last statistic of the testament union of Northern Iraq, the economic crisis coasted more than 10 billion dollar to the Northern Iraq since 2014, financial downturn that hit the region following the drop in oil prices and the ISIS war. It also expecting this amount increases to 15 billion dollars (Rudaw, 2015), if these crises last till the end of 2016. “We have had investors who went completely bankrupt over

the past two years because of the sudden halt of the economic growth in Northern of Iraq” said Yaseen Mahmoud, a spokesperson at the union. According to Mahmoud some 500 small and middle size businesses have declared bankruptcy while hundreds more have been “severely” affected by the economic stagnation. “These are colossal losses for the relatively fragile economy of Northern Iraq,” he told. According to the data made available by the union, the private sector has laid off around 330,000 full and part time employees over the past two years due to the cash crisis, which has pushed over 80 percent of the projects to an almost complete standstill (Rudaw, 2015).

The report comes amid Kurdish authorities sever austerity measures and government reforms that are planned to revive the economic growth by investing large sums in the private sector. The Northern Iraq has said that it will help the private sector to become a more attractive employer in the region with enhanced access to the banking system and insurance services. According the Northern Iraq reports, only 3 percent of the private companies and businesses in the region currently use the available services in the banks often due to business owner’s low confidence in the banking system. The government now hopes that by investing some \$5 billion in the private sector it could move large parts of the government employees to the private sector where they can enjoy similar state benefits such as pensions and paid holidays (Rudaw, 2015).

The private market in the Northern Iraq has been notoriously unregulated with almost no taxation or protecting labour rights. The insecurity at the private sector has prompted the bulk of the labour force to seek government employment with considerably lower wages. Around 1.5 million salaries are paid by the Northern Iraq government to, among others, civil servants and the retired which has so far amounted to 75 percent of the government’s annual budget. Authorities now hope that the government reforms will reignite the two-digit economic growth that the region experienced before the double shock of ISIS war and oil prices (Pshtiwan, 2016).

It can be argued that economic problems not having salary in Northern Iraq made their people annoying in all forms. Which made them making demonstrations many times, and it made lots of them leave their country towards Europe, and this way made losing a large number of them. Beside of that the in questions of Northern Iraq

are continuing argument with leaders in Baghdad for solving these problems and make it out of these difficulties.

Another case appeared between Erbil and Baghdad after Kirkuk's governorate Dr. Najmadeen Kareem suggested to the governorate council in March, 14th 2017 to vote for rising north of Iraq region's flag on all the government offices in Kirkuk. In march, 28th 2017 by the vote of most of them the council accepted the suggestion, after the meeting in a press conference Rebwar Talabani the head of Kirkuk governorate council said: there is not any country allowed to intervenes raising the regions flag in Kirkuk, also said: we ask the Iraqi government to implement the case of referendum in Kirkuk which has been delayed too much and people waits no longer. While the Arabian and Turkmen listed does not agree with that decision and stand against it. That decision makes internal and external reactions, such as:

- At the first a part of Turkmen parties made demonstration against that decision (Jamal, 2017).
- Prime minister of Baghdad Haidar Abadi said a press conference asked local government of Kirkuk to respect constitutional articles (Rudaw, 2017).
- Iraqi Perlman in 2/4/2017 decided to cancel the decision of the governorate council of Kirkuk for raising Kurds flag where not only Arabs Sunni, Shiite and Turkmen united against Kurds which this made the Kurdish presenters leaving Perlman hall and refused the meeting. About that decision, Abdul-Bari Zebari member of Iraqi Perlman in Kurds group and headmaster of external relations in Perlman said to Voice of America that "they were all united which was expected but we do not think it would have any effect what it happen, we believe that Article No. 110 in Iraqi constitution signs to that partnership between Baghdad and region which says that governorate council can make new laws or decide on internal cases. We as Kurd think it's good to remain on our decision and whom is not agree should go to constitutional court and there get the judgment" and also said that "if 140 article were applied now there would not a problem and could not the other problems happened between Baghdad and region, but it seems the governments of Baghdad one by one is to hide towards their people especially towards Kurdish and could not rule Iraq properly" (Diylan, 2017).

- In 4/4/2017, governorate council of Kirkuk hold a meeting against the decision of Iraqi Parliament decision on raising Kurds flag in the city, according to the announcement of the meeting, Kirkuk governorate council refuses the Iraqi Parliament's decision against Kurds flag and voted for referendum in Kirkuk as necessities of 140 articles. On this case, a delegation of Kurds region went to Baghdad in 6/4/2017 and met with all the Iraqi partners and told them clearly that they make referendum this year and they will never lower their flag in Kirkuk. In this visit Abadi sent new suggestion for Masoud Barzani president of North of Iraq region for solving Kirkuk case and Kurds flag (Arasta, 2017).

Externally, as like internally, the neighbouring countries leaders hold against that decision. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey while giving a speech for voting to 'yes' in Turkey's constitution amendment referendum said that "raising up the second flag in Kirkuk is totally wrong, those who do that thing are hypocrisies, and we mention them that Kirkuk is not only a Kurdish city, it is Kurdish, Arabic and Turkmen city", also said that "I ask administration in north of Iraq to Review that decision, if they did not lower that flag, They will pay a harsh punishment". Before the speech of President Erdoğan, Binali Yıldırım, the Prime Minister and Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey expressed their concern over that issue (Sputnik, 2017).

Iran showed their situation about second flag in Kirkuk in 3/4/2017, Bahram Qasimi, and Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran expressed his countries situation about that case and said that "raising any flag except of Iraqi's flag is unconstitutional to us. Iran supports pride of Iraqi land" and asked all to be committed with Iraq's constitution for solving problems between them.

American Ambassador in Iraq says that the referendum of North of Iraq region and raising Kurdish flag in Kirkuk is a factor for seduction of the war against ISIS and about military presence of his country in Iraq he said that the military experts of America are there by request of Baghdad and without saying his country's opinion about that case said "these things should be discussed in Iraqi constitution limits" (Jamekurdi, 2017).

In Iraqi constitution, it is mentioned that each Governorate Council could make decisions without returning to central government of Baghdad and Iraqi parliament, but this constitution permission should not be used for extremism and personal purposes, particularly in this kind of decisions that have effect on all minorities in Kirkuk and neighbouring countries.

4.5 The impact ISIS fighting on the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq

ISIS is the acronym of the “Ilawi Shiite Islamic State” but they keep themselves anonymous by using it as “Islamic State in Iraq and Sham”. The history of their foundation belongs to the beginning of the rise of “Jihad and Union Group” which has a unique history with terror. ISIS has got a long history with terror, in the beginning it was established under the name of “Jihad and Union Group”, and then it was known as “Al-Qaeda” after the leadership was given to “Abu Musaab Al-Zarqawi” in 2004. After Zarqawi was killed in 2006, “Abu Hamza Mujahid” was appointed as deputy and (Abu Omer Al-Baghdadi) as the new leader, but in 2010 the US forces were able to kill both Abu Omer Al-Baghdadi and his deputy Abu Hamza, then (Abu Bakir Al-Baghdadi) became the leader "Ameer" of the group. In 2013, the group published a video clip in which Abu Bakir Al-Baghdadi was talking about a convention between them and (Jabhat Al-Nusra) to expand their activities and establish the Islamic State in Iraq and Sham (ISIS)" (Jamil, 2014).

After the change of the democratic uprising of Syrian people from a peaceful civic revolution to a military one, which was obviously the reaction of the people against the dictatorship of Bashar Asad's regime, at the same time people got familiar with a new terrorist group under the name of (the Islamic State in Iraq and Sham) (Al-Monitor, 2014).

On 4 June, Iraqi police, under the command of Lieutenant General Mahdi Gharawi, cornered ISIS military leader Abu Abdulrahman al-Bilawi in Iraq (Al-Monitor, 2014).

Al-Bilawi blew himself up and Gharawi hoped it would prevent an attack. ISIS convoys of pickup trucks, each truck carrying four fighters, entered Mosul by shooting at the city's checkpoints. Though Mosul's first line of defence was thought to contain 2,500 soldiers, Gharawi says that "reality was closer to 500". He noted that since all of the city's tanks were being used by Iraqi forces in the Anbar province, the

city was left with little to combat the ISIS fighters. The insurgents hanged, burned, and crucified some Iraqi soldiers during their attack. ISIS commander Abu Abdulrahman al-Bilawi was killed near Mosul that day (The Guardian, 2014).

On 11 June, ISIS insurgents entered the oil refinery town of Baiji, seizing and setting its main courthouse and police station on fire. The militants, who were travelling in a group of around 60 vehicles, also took control of the Baiji prison and freed all the inmates within. Local residents told members of the media that ISIS sent a group of local tribal chiefs ahead of them, trying to convince the 250 guards at the oil plant to withdraw. Soldiers and police were also warned to leave the area (Sharqat Al-Awsat, 2014). Once ISIS controlled Mosul, they took over the Turkey's Consulate and they arrested (49) staff of the consulate and this made Turkish government stay silent until the hostages were rescued (Ozbudak, 2014).

Then, they attacked the Iraqi air force training base that known (COB Speicher) they captured it without war on 12 July 2014, around 4000 students were there, about 1700 of them were killed by ISIS all of them were Shiite. After ISIS controlled most of the Sunni's areas in the middle of Iraq and Syria, and they got their goals, they changed its name from ISIS to Islamic Caliphate then they elected Al-Baghdadi as Caliphate in July 2014, and they tried to remove the borders in the region (Rahman 2015, p. 15).

Later, between 1 and 15 August 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) expanded northern Iraqi territories under their control. In the region north and west from Mosul, ISIS conquered Zumar, Sinjar, Wana, Mosul Dam, Tel Keppe and Kocho, in the regions south and east of Mosul the towns Bakhdida or Qaraqosh, Karamlish, Bartella and Makhmour (Arango, 2014).

The offensive resulted in 100,000 Iraqi Christians driven from their homes, 200,000 Yazidi civilians driven from their homes in the city of Sinjar, 5,000 Yazidi men massacred, 5,000-7,000 of the Yazidis' women enslaved, and a war of several countries against ISIS (Neurink, 2014).

After this group started to attack the areas under the control of Northern Iraq's region, the political equations were changed all over the world, and this event became the main factor to the international community's participation in fighting against ISIS, but Turkey had a different attitude especially during the Security Conference in Paris which was launched in order to increase supports to Iraq in the anti-terrorism fighting, and because of having Turkish hostages with ISIS, Mevlüt

Çavuşoğlu, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that "his country has no support to offer to Iraq" (Seibert, 2014).

After a lot of diplomatic efforts and intensive plans, ultimately Turkey was able to rescue the consul and the employees of the Turkish Consulate in Mosul, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the President of Turkey declared that "through a successful operation, the Turkish consul in Mosul, his family and other employees of the consulate have been rescued after they had been arrested by ISIS" (Osman, 2014).

In response to the Fall of Mosul and its aftermath, the Iraqi government said that it would arm its civilians and its parliament would declare a state of emergency. The government also spoke of a plan to reorganize its military, involving collaboration between tribal people and the US military (The Guardian, 2015).

ISIS has got some goals and objectives are destroying and ruin the Sunni dominant cities and towns. Fight against and eradicate the opposite parties of Bashar Asad's party. Massacre of Sunni people and decrease their existence and influence in Iraq. Create a connection path to enhance military relationships and weapon transportation among Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon which have all been managed by Shiite governors. Distort the reality of Islam religion by killing, maiming, cutting heads and violence against women (Kareem, 2014).

Following the retreat of the new Iraqi Army during the June 2014 ISIS offensive, Peshmerga forces reportedly again managed to get hold on some weapons left behind by the Army. Since August 2014, Peshmerga forces have also captured some weapons from ISIS (Naylor, 2014).

After the ISIS offensive of August 2014, multiple governments decided to arm the Peshmerga with some light equipment, such as light arms, night goggles and ammunition (Spencer, 2014). However, Kurdish officials and Peshmerga have stressed that they are not receiving enough. They also stress that Baghdad is blocking even small arms from reaching the regional government, emphasizing the need for weapons to be sent directly to the regional government and not through Baghdad (Ernst, 2014).

Peshmerga has along 1050 km in the fighting with ISIS, at the beginning still now in the Northern Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga Ministry said in a statement that 1466 Kurdish soldiers have been killed since the start of the fighting against the radical group of

Islamic State (ISIS) in northern Iraq. Also, 8610 Peshmerga have been reportedly injured so far in the war on ISIS (Issa, 2016).

On 12 November 2015, over 7,500 Kurdish fighters, backed by the US-led coalition, began their offensive to retake Sinjar. Kurdish sources reported that they captured the village of Gabara and also had cut the highway between Sinjar and Syria (The New York Times, 2015).

According to a Peshmerga official, USA and British Special Forces also participated in the offensive (Ahmed, 2015). According to the same sources, 16 ISIL suicide attacks were thwarted (Sky News, 2015). Later, it was reported that forces had cut the Sinjar-Baiji and Sinjar-Tal Afar highways, effectively besieging ISIS in Sinjar.

A Peshmerga commander hinted that no prisoners would be taken during the operation. ISIS counter-attacked in the western part of Sinjar, while hundreds of Peshmerga were waiting to be deployed in battle (Rudaw, 2015). Kurdish forces had secured the wheat silo, cement factory, hospital and several other public buildings in the northern part of the city, with reports that ISIS had fled Sinjar prior to the offensive. However, a Peshmerga official expressed his concern about possible suicide bombers remaining within the city. Kurdish forces also secured 150 square kilometres (60 square miles) of territory around Sinjar from ISIS (The Daily Star, 2015). After 35 hours of operation Peshmerga controlled Sinjar, and President Masoud Barzani, Speaking to the media, Barzani said the ground offensive was carried out only by Peshmerga forces. Meanwhile, KRG Premier Nechirvan Barzani expressed his “utmost appreciation for the government and the people of the United States (US) for their vital support to the Peshmerga during the Sinjar liberation operation” (Anadolu Agency, 2015).

However, the challenges facing the relationship between Turkey and the regional government do not mean that the alliance Ankara-Erbil doomed. First, despite the on-going military cooperation between the various Kurdish groups in the fight against ISIS, it is not clear whether these actors at any time will be able to overcome their ideological differences and political. Since 2014 developments have proved that the relations between Barzani and the PKK / PYD have not completely gone away, despite their alliance in the on-going war against ISIS. There was intense rivalry between the various Kurdish factions fight against ISIS in November 2015 during the defence of Sinjar, an Iraqi province that is home to the Kurdish Yezidi community.

Moreover, once the fighting was in over Sinjar, the PKK, Barzani complained took all the credit for winning the ISIS (Deutsche Welle, 2015).

In addition, the regional government, which is experiencing economic difficulties due to the recent decline in oil prices, still relies on the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline for oil exports. In spite of these difficult developments, Turkey is still the main economic gateway to the regional government to the outside world. Barzani is well aware that will be independence in the future will not be able to survive without the support of key regional actors, including Turkey. Current events in December 2015 in Bashiqa, a northern Iraqi city of Mosul, confirm this analysis (Kayhan, 2016).

When Turkey deployed about 150 troops and 25 tanks with the aim of training the Kurdish Peshmerga and Arab forces to fight ISIS, he accused Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi Turkey of interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq and demand the immediate withdrawal of Turkish. In the face of this crisis, Barzani, the Turkish side took over, saying that "according to our information, Turkey and Iraq agreed in advance to the deployment of Turkish soldiers near Mosul. Alliance was created to train and support volunteer soldiers will edit Mosul". Barzani added that "this issue has been blown out of proportion" (Al-Monitor, 2015).

4.5.1 Mosul operation

Since the fall of Iraq's third largest city Mosul 2014 and seized by ISIS, the efforts to retake it under Iraq's government control is on-going and the national and international coalitions against ISIS established to defeat ISIS in the region. Then the Battle of retaking Mosul is a joint offensive by Iraqi government forces with Kurdish army Peshmerga, and international forces to retake the city of Mosul from ISIS (CNN, 2016).

The Sunnis' role in Mosul operation is highly significant because the majority of the city's resident are Sunni. An equally thorny issue is the participation of Sunnis, both militarily and politically. Sunni participation in the liberation of Mosul is being organized at the Nineveh Liberation Camp, on the suburbs of Erbil. The Liberation Camp is supported by Mosul's Governor, Atheel Nujayfi and comprises elements of the Iraqi police force and security services that fled Mosul back in June. The ousted Governor claims to have a force of 7,000 police officers ready to launch an offensive on the city. While their drive and determination are undeniable, reports suggest that

they are under-equipped. The prospects of using such a force to spearhead an attack on Mosul could likely lead to a second shocking and embarrassing defeat for such troops, in under a year (Morris, 2015).

With no political solutions on the table it is also unlikely that the local Sunni populous would support such an operation. Fearful of Baghdad and the rise in power of Shi'a armed groups, there needs to be a clear political framework for increased Sunni participation and engagement. Without this, Iraq's Sunni communities will remain wary of their Shiite counterparts. If there is no popular support for the attacking force, the likelihood of post-conflict stability is doubtful. Thus, even substantial numbers of troops are highly unlikely to take back Mosul in a clean and effective manner. Cooperation is needed between the Iraqi Army, Peshmerga Forces, local tribal elements, the international coalition, and the local communities inside Mosul itself. Even then, such an operation would have to be vast. Mosul will not fall in the same way as it did in June 2014, when a few thousand Islamic State (ISIS) fighters took control of the city. The fight against Islamic State will be a slow and difficult process. While many admit it will take a multi-year effort to combat the Islamic State, each small step has to be carefully measured; patience is needed. The world is looking for a quick fix to a complex and dynamic situation. A spring push-back, with the Iraqi Army in the lead, looks to be ill-fated.

The offensive, dubbed operation "We Are Coming, Nineveh" (Alsumaria, 2016), began on 16 October 2016 with forces besieging ISIS-controlled areas in the Nineveh Governorate surrounding Mosul. The battle for Mosul is considered key in the military intervention against ISIS, which seized the city in June 2014 (The New York Times, 2016).

The operation follows the Mosul offensive in 2015 and 2016. The offensive began with Iraqi troops and Peshmerga fighters engaging ISIS on three fronts outside Mosul, going village to village in the surrounding area (BBC, 2016). More than 120 towns and villages were liberated from ISIS control in the first two weeks of fighting. Iraqi Special Operations Forces entered the city on the eastern front. Met with fierce fighting, the Iraqi advance into the city was slowed by elaborate defences including road blocks, booby traps, suicide bombers and snipers the battle for Raqqa will be every bit as challenging as the one for Mosul, with both cities carrying huge

strategic and symbolic value to the jihadists and their self-declared caliphate covering territory in both Syria and Iraq (CNN, 2016).

The involvement of Turkey in the operation has considerably strained relations between Ankara and Baghdad. After Turkey said its troops fired artillery rounds at ISIS targets near the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, following a request by Kurdish Peshmerga forces. Turkey has 1,500 to 2,000 soldiers in Iraq, including 500 Turkish soldiers deployed to a base near Bashiqa, where they trained 1,500 Iraqi Sunni volunteers, mainly Turkmen, and Arabs to reclaim Mosul (Mathieu and Kodmani, 2016). Turkey's participation is against the wishes of the Iraqi government, which has said the Turks are violating Iraq's sovereignty. Turkey has refused to withdraw its forces. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan told the Turkish parliament that "we will play a role in the Mosul liberation operation and no one can prevent us from participating" and said their presence was to ensure that Mosul did not fall to Shi'a control and become a threat to Turkey (CNN, 2016). The United States (US) has reportedly attempted to persuade Iraq to cooperate with Turkey on the Mosul offensive. US Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter visited Turkey on 21 October 2016, where an agreement was proposed allowing limited Turkish participation, pending Iraqi approval. Carter discussed Turkey's involvement in detail with Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi in Baghdad on 22 October 2016 and with Masoud Barzani, the President of Regional Government, in Erbil on 23 October 2016 (The Washington Post, 2016).

This war has become a question for everyone, when, where and how it will end? The answer of this question is not an easy one, and the war is constantly moves to a more complicated phase. So far, no one can answer these questions, where will the final confrontation be and when the ground for the final phase will be made? Who will get the most benefits? The war will not end only in Iraq and Syria. The US officials have announced that the anti-terrorism war will last for several years, and simultaneously the terrorist groups are getting more expanded and powered without declaring their financial and support resources and they get more and more weapons continuously (Jamil, 2014).

The anti-terrorism war which has been started against ISIS in Syria and Iraq is a strange one and it has not been seen in the history, especially when the western countries and Islamic Arabic countries are led by USA to participate in this war,

there are big regional, religious and sectarian conflicts between the member states of this international coalition like the conflict between Shiite and Sunni, Arab and Israel along with Iran's dream to dominate the whole Middle East, these are serious issues and conflicts in the Middle East and they could not be overcome easily. It seems that the ISIS crisis will last for a long time and the Kurdish regions will be the ground of finalizing complicated political issues in the area.





5. CONCLUSION

This paper aims to analyse Northern Iraq and Turkey relations considering the conditions of geography, politics and economics. At the beginning, it focuses on the geographical location of Northern Iraq which has been a factor of making tourism relations with Turkey.

Ankara's relationship with the Iraqi Kurds does not need to be seen with such a pessimistic outlook. And despite the fact that relations between Turkey and regional government has reached a level it was unthinkable a few years ago, but it seems that the relationship contain balances inherent. The relationship between Turkey and regional government is already on its way towards the saturation point unless torn Iraq and Turkey responded formed an alliance with the regional government.

In the political view, Northern Iraq can but argued as the first very actively and dynamically participated in the relations and completion with his neighbours, considering types of relation and ideology and faiths of political parties. With the progress that the political relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq have seen, there were several earnings to boot. Despite Northern Iraq is not the end of a regional cooperation system of planning about the Kurds case, Northern Iraq declared that Kurds case is not the case of a military group in the mountains but it is a case of a nation in the Middle East. This shows that that region in his beginning till now was not frozen governorate, but it was in advance very active and effective.

Effective countries relation on Turkey-north of Iraq, although their effect is not in the same direction politically but are cooperated against the terrorist organization of ISIS and this by help of Iraqi army and Peshmerga (the north of Iraq's region's fighter) .and by helping the homeless who left their home in fear of the ISIS war, so the economic relations have seen changes after the Turkey and Russia renewed their relations. As the political observers say this will help in developing economical relation between Turkey-north of Iraq, because according to the bond between a Turkish company and natural resources ministry of north of Iraqi region it was decided to finish natural gas's pipe between Turkey and north of Iraq at the

beginning of 2017. Which were satisfying Turkey's needs of natural gas for 50 years, but now that project seems to be slowed down which is not a good factor on the region's economy especially for that bad economic situation sees nowadays.

Economically, Northern Iraq found in a list of countries that has oil and gas, which area effective principle to strengthen its relationship with Turkey. With increasing financial problems that Northern Iraq has nowadays, it should be paid attention to the economic progress resources, concerning different sectors, advanced them, especially oil and gas industry. Plans should be made for building different types of factories, such as petrochemical factory, industry of agricultural products, agricultural instrument factory, knitting and sewing factory, producing instruments and tools for progressing construction buildings and road etc. Besides of that development of tourism sector, this is another important economic development resource.

The political, financial, and diplomatic seeks are reasons to review the Turkish political moves. Geographically, this country has an important position in the area and all the worlds have an eye open on it. After the visits of the Turkish politic men to Erbil, and the opposite, there must be an accurate agenda for this union. The Kurdish-Turkish strong relations are not temporary or for several days. Otherwise, it must be seen as a great game changer because it has the signs of a new Middle East. Turkey should develop its communications with the Northern Iraq so that the Kurdish-Turkish relationship will be the most precious strategic process of the 21st century. Finally, with all these relations it is decided in February 2016 that Northern Iraq natural gas exported to Turkey. Exporting natural gas has a special importance to both Turkey and Northern Iraq. Thus, in light of the political and economic background of Turkish-Northern Iraq relations, and despite major challenges to the Turkey-regional Government partnership, it is likely that their cooperation will continue within the context of emerging regional dynamics

At the end, one should ask what should be done with the progress in all the types of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq region, and performance of Turkish Consulate in Erbil the capital of the region. Northern Iraq is not an independent state and it cannot have its own consulate in the foreign countries, besides of that it owns Northern Iraq Foreign Relations Office, and many offices in different countries to make contacts easier with these countries.

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RESUME



Name Surname: ZhiyanNajmaddin Hassan HASSAN

Place and date of Birth: 09/02/1983

E-mail: jian_2012@yahoo.com, zhiyan.N.hassan@gmil.com

Education:

Bachelor: 2009-2010 Salahaddin University, College of Language, Translation Department.

Master: 2018, Istanbul Aydin University, Social Sciences Institute, Department of Political and International Relations, Political Science and International Relations Program.