

PRSHA ABUBAKR: A TWO - AWARD WINNING GIRL

WOMEN, P4



DEATH OF POLITICAL ISLAM IN KURDISTAN

POLITICS, P 11



ARE OPTIONAL CLASSES REALLY OPTIONAL !?



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HASAR ALI

I walked in five minutes late to my Physics II, as I set up my seat I saw the small rotating white board filled with a plethora of homework problems and an announcement. It read that we have optional classes every Wednesday, and before I looked at the time of the class, (which conflicts with a class of mine,) my disgruntled thoughts began. I just read a similar incident on AUIS Issues, where I do more reading there than for my Civilization class. I remembered many students, sarcastically and seriously, defend the teacher and his teaching methods. As my professor went at it with electric flux, my mind was in the field of this ordeal. To keep in mind, I do not intend to criticize any professor's teaching method. I do not know Dr. Mahdi N. Kalahrudi, and I like my professors', Dr. Nikolaos Kalogeropoulos, Physics II class. I intend to criticize the practice. On the issue of optional classes, I believe it cre-

ates an unfair advantage, and starts a bad practise. I believe it is the duty of students to resist this change, for the establishment, are not only neutral, but incentivised to promote, if they are not already. The so called "optional classes" are not actually so. If they were to be treated as normal classes towards your academic credit, that would have been a non-issue. Optional classes are there to raise the class' level of understanding. This is not a problem, but a sound act if done occasionally when it is needed. It is a problem however when it is done every week. There are many reasons where it might seem like students need these classes every week, but I argue, most are the fault of, not the students, but the establishment. The establishment has either failed to teach the prerequisites, or the teacher is not up to par. In any case, taking away these "optional classes," and if they were necessary as in many cases they seem to be, then the class average should be below

the passing grade. This means the students will be entitled to a curve, as it has been the case here and many other universities. Again, optional classes are, in my opinion, a good thing when done in moderation. A counter argument that could be resorted to is that students have the option of studying online or on the book. This is a faulty argument since having the same teaching method, the same cohesive medium of learning, in the same environment is a big advantage to whomever attends the class, and a disadvantage to the ones who do not attend. Argument could also be made that students could only attend to the subjects that they are having trouble with. There is office hours for that. The establishment is incentivised to promote this activity because it is in the benefit of them and the faculty. They get to overlook many problems (HR problems, prerequisites not had been taught well) by assigning an optional class, that would definitely raise the class average. The pro-

fessors would evade blame for faulty teaching methods, lose incentive to be more efficient and/or improve upon teaching method. The establishment would lose incentive to hire more selectively, (or less selectively depending on the category), improve upon courses in the prerequisites, and/or overall take students' complaints more seriously. As I have discussed, the optional classes are, in actuality, mandatory in the sense that missing them gives you a noticeable disadvantage. A solution must be sought after elsewhere. A solution that respects students' time. If the class requires 2 hours more of teaching, then two credits more should have been available to earn. It is the students' duty to advocate for their rights, this case being an elementary one. Optional classes are a hack, hacks are only acceptable sometimes, otherwise it is just bad planning.

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRIES FRONT-LINE FEMALE: A PROJECT TO ENGAGE KURDISH WOMEN IN THE OIL SECTOR

PRSHA ABUBAKR

As an engineering student and a women activist, I participated in the Study of the United State Institute (SUSI) for Student Leaders-a five week program designed and funded by the U.S Department of State. The theme of the program was Women's leadership, within which we have focused on American politics, education, history, and culture; also we included our societal issues in the discourses and the conversations. Me, as a Kurdish woman activist, I have always been passionate about solving women issues in the Kurdish society.

We were 80 women from different countries to celebrate and to share our cultural experiences in Washington D.C. This program helped me to build leadership skills and understand more about the land of the free and the home of the brave (U.S.); to learn more about different cultures and ethnicities; and to explore variety of topics through an American perspective, especially the role of women in public affairs.

The purpose of my participation was not mainly to learn, but to represent a decent model of Kurdish women as well. Throughout the program, I have revealed many characteristics of Kurdistan through talking about the history of the Kurds, in addition to their culture, food, dress, jewelry, politics and so on. During this program, I was able to develop action plans for my project, and I feel extremely honored and grateful for winning an award for the best action plan. My project was about increasing the number of women in oil and gas industries, and in the Petroleum-Engineering Department as well.

There is always a prejudice against women. As a female who lived in this society, I have gone through many difficulties and challenges. When I decided to study Energy Engineering, I was told that I shouldn't study this major because the society doesn't let women work in oil fields. That was the moment that rendered a chance for me to surpass the fabricated obstructions; I made my own decision, and challengingly began to study engineering. My goal has always been to encourage women to have their own voice,

and to change the wrong-negative view of the society towards women.

Coming back to the point, Pioneering women: Oil and Natural Gas Industry's Frontline Female is my project, and it is designed to attract more women into the oil and gas industry, which remains a globally male-dominated working sector even today. This is particularly true for Iraq and Kurdistan Region, where there is insignificant percentage of women working in the oil sector because of gender barriers that are still existing within companies and within the society as a whole.

The KRG has had a steady increase in oil production from 400,000 barrels a day in 2014 onward, and it is expected to reach 1 billion by the end of 2019. However, there is less than 6% percent of women study Energy Engineering as a major and, who are working in the oil fields. A majority of women in Iraqi Kurdistan who have a university degree remain jobless due to inefficiencies on the job market, particularly in the oil sector.

Hopefully, this project will have a substantial impact on removing the stereotypes and the baseless-emotional burden of worry that women are not capable of working in the oil and natural gas industries; and it renders programs to encourage women to get degrees in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics); also it generally makes women in our society attentive about the abundant-existing opportunities to have a successful career in the oil sector with high salaries. Moreover, it is planned to develop a collaborative network among universities and the oil sector with a two-fold objective: Increasing the chances of women to find a feasible job in the oil sector, and for companies to choose employees from a broader scope of educated and talented people. This type of cooperation will increase women participation in the workforce while also it improves the supply and demand for labor. It will also encourage oil companies to provide jobs for women in the future, while utilizing their talents. This will, remarkably, reduce the number of highly educated jobless women and will empower them to build a better future for themselves.

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Prsha is holding the U.S. State Department Certificate of Appreciation

What Paved the Way for the Assassination of Tara Fars?



Tara Fars is posing for a model photo

DAVAR MOHAMMED

I was on my way back to Erbil when one of my trip-mates shockingly spread the news of the murder of Tara

Fars, a 22-year-old Iraqi Instagram star. The driver, who was one her followers on Instagram, surprisingly asking why the hell she got killed! Despite the conservatism and closed-mindedness of the nowadays Iraqi culture, I was thinking of another factor that played a role in her assassination which was the silence and negligence of the Iraqi civil society and international media to put enough pressure on the government to prevent further deaths. Tara Fars, a Christian Iraqi Instagram celebrity had just been voted one of Iraq's most followed social media stars. Ms. Fars's posts on Instagram were very controversial among the youth circles of the Iraqi society due to the tattoo showing-off on

her body. The lifestyle that Ms. Fars was living in Erbil and Beirut was not acceptable in Baghdad. She was shot to death in broad daylight. The Iraqi Interior Ministry in a statement released that she was murdered by a known "criminal extremist group". This is not the first time that these "extremist groups" carry out such campaigns. After the fall of Baathist regime in 2003, the radical militias have been targeting the icons and people that they consider their acts as "ruining Iraqi culture and reputation". The 2012 campaign of purging the Iraq emos was aimed to eradicate any attempt to "westernize" the Iraqi youth outfit. In the City of Sadr, there were fliers informing the youth to dress

manly, maintain "complete manhood", and cut their hair short, otherwise they would face the "the wrath of God". Prior the death of Ms. Fars in the central Baghdad, four-murder cases of prominent women happened. Rasha al-Hassan and Rafif al-Yasiri, two beauticians who died in a suspicious situations in Baghdad a week before her murder. These series of killings did not attract much attention until Ms. Fars's turn came. There is a clear message behind every single bullet that was shot by these thugs towards each of these woman; We do not let Iraq becomes a liberal, free, and open-minded society again! The civil society NGOs could easily demonstrate and take civic actions inside the

There is a clear message behind every single bullet that was shot by these thugs towards each of these women.

Iraqi parliament against these atrocities. None of these happened in the past and in the Tara Fars's case. Moreover, the government has been much negligent than the NGOs. The ministry of Interior is aware of the perpetrator, but silent on why they have not taken any action against them.

POETRY HAS THE CURE



Ahmadi Khani (1650-1707)

MOHAMMED KAMARAN

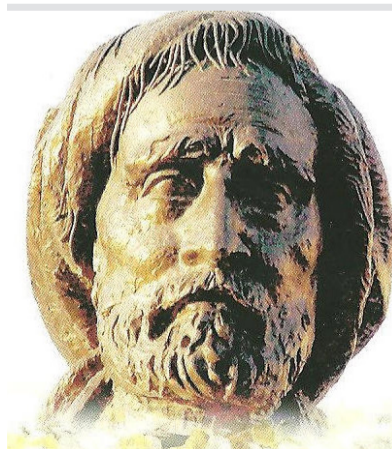
Kurdish literature, and particularly poetry, has always been an assistive tool in enhancing and fueling national struggle, even if the period in which the poems flourished the situations were miserable and depressing. Each society has developed and develops its literature, whether poetry, dramas, or novels, based on its cultural and societal relations and interrelations. Moreover, in addition to being reflective of a society's patterns, literature diagnosis the goods and the ills of that society, and, surprisingly maybe, often suggests solutions. Concerning Kurdish literature, and chiefly poetry, it has mostly been shaped by discourses on national integration and liberation since 17th century, when its firsthand flower was starting to blossom after centuries of silence. Kurdistan in 16th century had been virtually divided between Ottoman and Safavid empires, both which took advantage of geographical division to create factions among them in the form of principalities under their hegemony, and to push them against each other; hence the issues national integration and liberation were deeply embodied in Kurdish poetry, and the Kurdish literature has been striving to find solutions to fulfil them since then. In this descriptive, and to an extent analytical article, I will go through some principal aspects of the poetry of Ahmadi Khani, Haji Qadiry Koyi, and Abdulla Pashew, to historically explain

the development of national sentiments in Kurdish literature. And the reason why I focus on these three is that I see a steady-historical trend in their methods; indeed we do not have Euripides kind of poets in Kurdish literature.

In the introduction of mem u zin, Ahmadi Khani, the founder of Kurdish nationalism in 17th century, presents a question that disturbs his spirit and consciousness: Why Rome (Ottoman Empire) and Persia (Safavid Empire) have dominated the Kurds despite the valor they have, and they made them their inferiors? "Whoever resorts to his sword, [should] have all the desired things in his disposal". In the poem he drunkenly grips the man's hand that pours wine in his cup and asks him this question: Why Kurds should have this destiny while they are extraordinarily brave? Khani attributes this unpleasant fact to the absence of a powerful king and the disunity among Kurds, as sicknesses: "If only there were harmony among us, if we were to obey a single one of us....We would perfect our religion, our state, and would educate ourselves in learning and wisdom." ¹ Moreover, Khani for factionalism and subordination to foreign powers blames the ruling-fragmented 'princes', not the poor and artists, like him: "It is a shame for princes and notables, the poor and artists are not to lift the indictment". Therefore, we notice from Khani that a righteous king, who unites the Kurds for the national purpose and who appeals to his

and his counterparts' wisdom and arts, is indispensable as a solution; and that the courage of the Kurds is not adequate and they can be exploited, otherwise. These tokens and observations of Khani are still familiar today. Actually, what makes mem u zin immortal, besides the imposed de facto, is its mythical nature; Khani did not tie it up to historicity and chronology, he gave a natural justification to a phenomena to which a nation went through. We are in debt to the breakthrough he materialized, but his patterns are only applied as a big picture, because simply it is a myth; however we see Haji and Pashew take the lead of maintaining and promoting nationalism afterwards, and funnel down to detect and assess the solutions, based on their lifetime events.

Almost 200 years later Khani's successor, Haji Qadiry Koyi, went further on to cure the illness of being enclosed by the two empires, and the paradox of being their inferior while having descent courage. Having witnessed his homeland consequently and persistently plundered by these empires, and that Kurds are not united, he developed a revolutionary-causal sequence: first unity, next arm raise, finally a comprehensive revolution. However, Haji elaborated on Khani's chanting for a king and civic intellect, but his difference is that he had found both pre-requisites in his time: Yazdansher as a king, and himself as a man of intellect; "He [Yazdansher] is the source for hope and happiness today, no body except him is the survivor of Kurdish people". Nonetheless, he preferred affirmative action upon education in that time; "Through sword and pencil State is superb, I do have pencil but the sword is missing". Thereby, Haji appeals to the people to raise arm and struggle for integration and liberation.

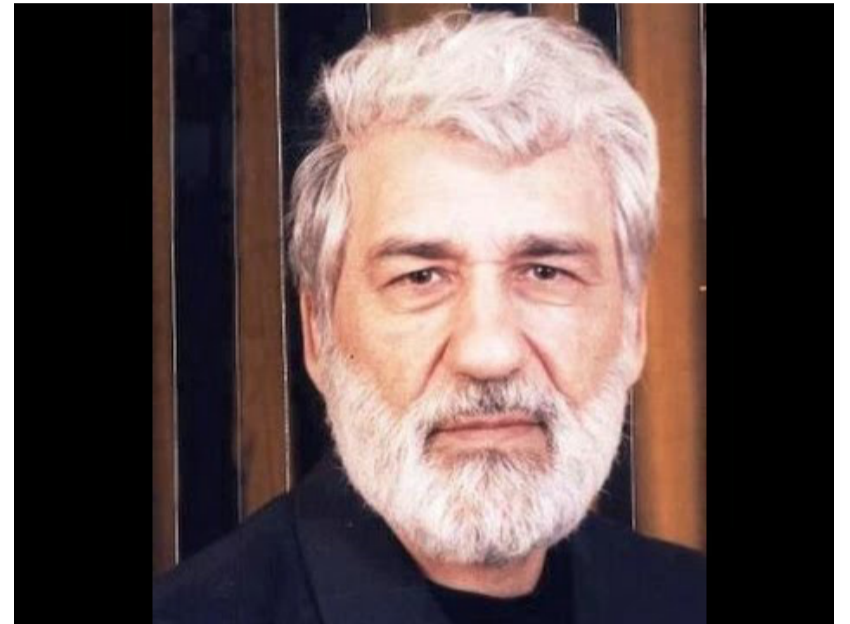


Haji Qadir (1817 - 1897)

No wonder we find this seemingly radical rhetoric in Haji's poems, because, except witnessing what Khani had witnessed two centuries before, his lifetime was parallel with the rise of European nationalism (19th century) by which he and the Kurdish elites

(Sheikhs) were influenced to push for national liberation, as almost

Therefore, as a remedy, he has resorted to strengthen patriotism



Abdulla Pashew (born in 1946)

all the nations did; and the Ottoman Tanzimat system which intensified these sentiments further among the nationally homogeneous people.

One-hundred years after Haji, Pashew emerged. For him, the events were precarious: the Kurdish factionalism has intensified,

to be the fundamental instinct inside Kurdish people and their political leadership, as foundations for a state. For this purpose, he embraced the rhetoric of shifting affiliations from parties to the homeland; hence he has been trying to influence the youth as he felt disappointed of the old generation, particularly, when he saw the latter spilled their brothers' blood: "Come to this world you millennials [in 1994], if you don't, new blood would not move in Kurds' nerve". Still, this may be a tautology of Khani's 'civic education', but, while Khani meant literacy, Pashew stressed patriotic intellect and intimacy. For the Kurdish leadership, however, Pashew has usually appeared offensive and critical, blaming them for the continuity of the domination and humiliation of the surrounding countries. Meanwhile, he observed that the two empires besides territorial invasion they have penetrated in our minds too; through their clothing fashions, Islamic ideologies, and media, all of which strikingly harmed Kurdish language and culture. And he blames Kurdish political players for not being responsive for such vindictive deeds. So for Pashew, unlike Haji, the righteous leader yet hasn't emerged and still people are not patriotic enough to have a revolution. Eventually, saying that Pashew is a nihilist and antagonist is a subtle judgment; for his rhetoric is a plausible reaction to the calamity that his nation suffers, namely the losing confidence to be recognized nationally and the favoritism of other cultures. Therefore, in brief, and for now, the cures are patriotism and national confidence. Adhere to them.

If only there were harmony among us, if we were to obey a single one of us....We would perfect our religion, our state, and would educate ourselves in learning and wisdom.

which, at the peak, it led to a civil war (Brother-Killing War as he calls it) in 1990s, and the national values has been decaying. Pashew, too, realizes that disunity and the surrounding-hostile countries are the major concerns; but with this age of globalization and modernity, Khani and Haji's solutions (a king and revolution) are not completely compatible.

¹Translated by Michael M. Gunter, *The Contemporary Roots of Kurdish Nationalism in Iraq*, 2013.

WHY WOULD AL-MASHRIQ STATES SHOULD INTEGRATE ECONOMICALLY?

ANSAR OMARV

Mutual interests are one of the factors that lead different nations, countries and powers to cooperate peacefully. Economic integration in Al-Mashriq leads to a peaceful disintegration of the existing states in favor of a more homogenous state. Integration in this region may lead to a peaceful disintegration of Kurdistan from Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria. Mashriq is defined as the Arab world which includes Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan as well as Iraq and Syria. The Gulf States are also part of it. Al-Mashriq specifically refers to Iraq, Iran, and Syria. This part of the world as any other parts has the potential to cooperate peacefully even though there has been a bitter history among them. Integration is unification of financial strategies between various states via the fractional or full abolition of tariffs and non-tariff limitations on exchange occurring among them before their joining.

Al-Mashriq's economic integration scope possesses substantial natural resources, significant labor forces, and

accumulated potential that needs more investment. Investments lead to production which involves turning resources through capital and labor to a final product. It also provides a bigger market to the engaged states in the integration that once integrated. It actually costs a lot of money to disintegrate economically, but it is easier to accept the differences to the degree of political disintegration. The requirements to any economic integration are elimination of barriers that cause free movement of the goods and services, free movement of labor in the Al-Mashriq in addition to free investment movement, and harmonizing the economic policies. Another pre-requisite is a shared custom policy that is supported by a collective institution that has some form of sovereignty among the Al-Mashriq countries. This economic integration may prevent political conflicts; or the political environment may even facilitate economic integration.

If the economic integration occurs before the political disintegration, it may be easier since a developed economy is

a pre-requisite for a democratic regime that believes in constitutional self-determination. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union are two examples that are remarkable for this case.

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HOW THE US EMBARGO ON IRAN IS AFFECTING IRAQ'S ECONOMY?

ARAM ALI AL-HAMAWANDY

After U.S. withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal, 'it' has reinstate a severe embargo on Iran that is intended to restrain Iran's behavior beyond nuclear control and devolving atomic weapons that poses a security threat. With the Sanctions coming into effect, Iraq will be a major victim; for Iraq heavily relies on goods and energy derivatives from Iran. According to the Iraqi Ministry of Commerce, the trade exchange volume between Iraq and Iran was 13 billion dollars in 2017. The Iraqi prime minister, Haider al-Abadi announced that his country will abide and comply with US sanctions and will stop all remittances, fearing Iraq to be affected by the embargo too. This will jeopardize around five thousand workers of losing their

job in the Auto industry if the government is not certified to import spare parts. Also, it will affect the traders, who heavily their business depend on Iranian products because of proximity and huge exchange rate differences comparing to other countries, especially China. With halting the current remittances with Iran, Iraq needs to search for alternative sources for energy. According to the economic advisor to the Prime Minister, Mohammed Saleh, for Iraq to recompense for their energy necessities, they will be trading with the Gulf countries, mainly with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Iraq cannot be affected that much by these sanctions because Iraq depends greatly on oil imports and port revenues that can compensate for many economic damages. Instead

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of importing goods from Iran, Iraqis can boost their economy and decrease unemployment through developing self-sufficient facilities in industries and agriculture.

A WELL RECOVERED ECONOMY FOR THE UNPREPARED MIND-SETS IN KURDISTAN

KARBIN DARWESH

The new economic cycle of Kurdistan demands a new understanding of adaptation. In the mid of 2014, with the rise of the Islamic State and economic downfall of Iraq's 234.65 (World Bank) Oil Oriented GDP faces the threat of terrorist groups. Safety and security are the main criteria for foreign companies to invest in oil reserves countries; however many of them left and now the economy is recovering. According to Rozh Muhammad, a currency exchange office owner, "[It] has almost been ten months since the exchange rate of Iraqi dinar to dollar has been between 120-122,000 ID, and this is similar to 2012-2013's exchange rate that is considered the Golden Economical Period in Kurdistan." He expects the economy of Kurdistan to heal once full amount of salary is given, and the Iraqi government resends 17% of its annual budget to Kurdistan. The exchange rate is monitored for

six months. Once it exceeds the time, the economy will be considered stable. Iraqi Central Bank (CBI) actively works to keep the exchange rate stable, so the people do not lose buying power. CBI controls the stable inflation rate by paying salary and loans as well as issuing shares.

The factors that contribute to the economic recovery are bank lending, consumer spending, and increase in shipping and employment rate.

KRG has paid back all the loans to the traders and contractors in the form of bank check, and now mostly gives three quarters of citizen's salary while the government could only pay a quarter of its employees' salaries with delays. Now people have more buying power prior to the economic recovery, but there is still lack of confidence in buying. The problem is that people are still used to the prior economic cycle, and it takes them a while until they get used to the new one.

Political crises in Middle

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East, which resulted in U.S.-imposed economic sanctions on Turkey and Iran, have made the currency of the latter countries to lose their values remarkably. Thus, it gives Iraqi dinar more buying power as a consequence of exchange rate. Kurdistan highly depends on imported Turkish and Iranian products; hence money circulation causes employment rate and transactions to increase.



Designed by KARBIN DARWESH

THE EPIDEMIC OF SELF-ENTITLEMENT



HAMNO NAWZAD

Humans are very distinctive species. Although this distinction can be validated through many different ways but we concentrate on the behavioral part. When we are interacting with different people on different levels directly or indirectly we always encounter a type of behavior that is

strange, yet, persistent and repetitive in some people. This behavior is induced by something called self-entitlement and those who possess it tend to make it harder for the rest of us. Entitlement is defined by Oxford Dictionary as “[t]he belief that one inherently deserves of privileges or special treatment.” Self-entitled people grant

themselves special treatment, authority, privileges, and righteousness without earning or deserving it. It does not stop here; they want others to abide by them as well. This issue planted psychological, political, and social problems among societies. In some societies the color of one’s skin entitles them rights and privileges, especially from those who do not have the same skin color. In political realm, we can see how politicians justify their positions and decisions through self-entitlement. For example, in Middle East being from certain families, i.e. religious, military, and elite, might entitle one a highway to authority and marginalize and suppress those who stand on their way. Psychologically, this creates more arrogant- irresponsible and narcissist individuals that become a burden upon the people around them. An alerting problem arises when society systematically feeds to this self-entitlement. It comes to celebrate, re-

ward, and justify it. Gradually, since it is rewarded like a snowball effect, once started small it gets bigger as it slides down, more people develop this sense of entitlement. The society will become less just, more chaotic, and harder to live in. For instance, recently we saw how a man got beaten, humiliated, and threatened by a security guard who is close to a political figure in front of a camera in Sulaimani. You can think of many reasons why the persecutor would do such thing; one main reason is when the persecutor entitled himself the right to do what he did. These are the kind of things that cause further disruptions in a society which makes us question the way we see human dignity. When you have this in you as a person, you become less productive and less ambitious; since you are from prestigious-elite family that happen to be influential. Just being a member of this elite group granted you many privileges that even if other people work their entire lifetime would not get it. But for you it’s all natural: you have it and you want the flow to continue, so you relax and enjoy; well, that flow may or may not continue in the future. Another person who does not have this source to feed their self-entitlement by default, they become a type of person who will only complain and do nothing about the way

their life is. Either way, recognizing this kind of behavior is important for both individual and societal growth.

“**Self-entitled people grant themselves special treatment, authority, privileges, and righteousness without earning or deserving it. It does not stop here; they want others to abide by them as well.**”

HOW TO MAKE KURDISTAN GREAT AGAIN!?



A Kurdish popular rally

BASTA SEERWAN

The bold statement this quote made make my mind glance over all the recent years twists and turns in Kurdistan and Iraq’s economy. This simple quote in Yoga, Power and Spirit book was sitting in a small bookshop in one of the Mesopotamian cities waiting for me to read it and acknowledge it weeks later in my article in my University’s newspaper. Coincidence? You’re

free to think so, but I think not. In fact, I’m not a writer or a journalist or have any intention to be one, a friend asked since he thought I’m interesting enough (I hope!) to write about a topic that’s important to me and I want the world (AUIS family and friends!) to know.

So, here I am, a person who’s mostly concerned about world peace, I want my Kurdistan or at least my people and all people living in coexistence with other people regardless of their ethical, economical, religious or

national background, to have a huge amount of hope in the future. I know this sounds like words from a person sitting in their chair and doing nothing and bringing nothing into real life but thinking and thinking.. It’s useless and boring!

The excitement lies in where can we fix or put our building blocks for a more prosperous Kurdistan and Iraq and how do we do that. Here’s a thought: A few months ago I’ve met with a few AUIS Alumni’s in the cafeteria and asked about how they were doing and what were they doing now they’ve graduated (Me asking with big bright and happy thought and picture for what’s out there in me). They all complained in some way or another. At least there was one story or one occurrence in everyone’s stories: There’s always a business out there who neglected what we call in business (Business Ethics, Business Integrity or Good Corporate Culture). Our economy is slowly moving towards

privatization. If we want a stronger economy, we need business to grow and such rigid and inflexible business environments have to eventually fade away.

Going back to our AUIS alumnae, the businesses they’ve applied to seemed like very good investment for their time and efforts. When they started working at these businesses they realized the business treated and exploited their employees badly, or the environment did not suit their hopes for a better future. Having said all of this, there are also many AUIS alumnae including those who had these unfortunate encounters with these businesses, who end up in jobs that satisfied not only their financial needs but also their analytical or intellectual needs and skills. My aim in pointing out these “bad” businesses is the fact that if we want to grow our economy and make Kurdistan great again, we need to change the way we do business and entirely develop better corporate

and business cultures and it all starts with those of us who like to call themselves Leaders of the Future!”

TO BE CONTINUED ...

“**If we want a stronger economy, we need business to grow and such rigid and inflexible business environments have to eventually fade away.**”

VENOM: A DISAPPOINTING EXPERIENCE



CHENAR CHALAK

Venom was directed by Ruben Fleischer and stars Tom Hardy, Riz Ahmed, and Michelle Williams, and it's supposedly the first entry in Sony's Cinematic Universe of Spider-Man Villains. The movie has been receiving highly mixed reviews: On the hand general movie goers have deemed the movie to be enjoyable, while most critics have called it one of the worst comic-book movies in the last decade. The movie delivered a staggering 80 Million Dollars in its first weekend at the box office, breaking the record for an October opening weekend.

A corporation by the name of Life Foundation discovers a comet covered in symbiotic lifeforms while exploring space for new habitable worlds. By order of the CEO of the corporation, Carlton Drake (Ahmed), four samples of the alien symbiote are brought back to Earth. On the way back, one of the symbiotes escapes the ship and goes on to eventually bond with Eddie Brock (Hardy), a journalist who's previously had his share of problems with Drake, taking over Brock's body and transforming him into a monstrous creature called Venom.

Ever since Sony announced that they were making a Venom movie that will

be separate from the MCU and will star Tom Hardy, the project received a lot of backlash and was not met with a lot of enthusiasm by the fans. I personally was never one of those people, and actually had high hopes for this movie, especially when considering the presence of the always charismatic Tom Hardy as the classic Spider-Man villain. Now that I've watched the movie, it hurts me to say : I did not like this movie.

The editing in this movie is horrible. Because of Sony's desire to appeal to as much people as they can, the movie was poorly edited down to only 112 minutes which was a really unwise decision to make, considering that there are many scenes in the movie that when you're watching it you feel like it does not belong there. Also, the movie was given a PG-13 rating instead of an R rating, which is absurd if you consider Venom's violent and gory storylines in the comics, which we were deprived of in this movie because of the rating. The pacing is absolutely horrendous, and the events seem to be moving way too fast without giving the audience the chance to reflect on what just happened. We clearly see this in the first 15 minutes of the movie which sees an extremely rapid dramatic change in the story that feel way too rushed and doesn't make any sense, and unfortunately that rapid change in

the story doesn't just stop there but actually goes on for the rest of the movie. The movie also does a terrible job at utilizing their performers, making a total waste of a 4 time Oscar nominated talent like Michelle Williams by putting her in the movie for almost only 15 minutes and in a very insignificant role, and casting Riz Ahmed in the role of the villainous Carlton Drake, a role that doesn't fit him in the slightest. But my two main problems with the movie are: One, the dialogue, and Two, the villain. The dialogue in this movie is at most times cringe-worthy, lines like "So many snacks, too little time" and "Turd in the wind" make the scenes look unintentionally funny when they're not supposed to be, and contradictorily, making many jokes that don't really hit the mark and just end up being cringy. And a villain, who literally doesn't have any backstory or motive and is in fact just evil for the sake of being evil and because he wants to, makes the movie that much more unendurable. If I had to say one good thing about this movie, it would be the performance of Tom Hardy and the relationship between Venom and Eddie Brock which was really enjoyable at times and was the reason for the few good scenes here and there that the movie had. But at the end of the day, I really consider Venom a disappointing start to Sony's cinematic universe,



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and I personally wouldn't recommend wasting money on seeing it in theaters.

DID: THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF DISORDER IN IRAQ



REZ LATIF

DID stands for Dissociative Identity Disorder, also known as multiple personalities disorder, which is a type of mental disorder in which the patients have other personalities inside themselves, and their alters, other personalities, are completely different from the patients usual personality, they also suffer from memory issue since they are usually not able to remember

what the alters have done. However, it is not that Iraq and Kurdistan has many cases of DID, rather it is people of Iraq and Kurdistan tending to have multiple personalities, and that is the problem and cause of this article. We as Iraqis want to be fake. We like to be anyone but ourselves. One day we do good, and another our alter takes over to spread violence. Now I have not done any research, but my proof is two examples that I am sure most of us have noticed

in a way or another: First, our politicians who tend to have uncountable alters. When our politicians go live on television, or are among people, many promises and exaggerated words leave their mouth. As soon as they reach their hideout, their alters take over and start to send death threats. Most recent examples were Iraq and, soon after, Kurdistan general elections when we saw the same faces, who had been ordering their men, in past, to damage poor protestors asking for their basic rights, on television begging the same damaged protestors for their votes. That is why it is likely that our politicians are suffering from DID. Second and the most important is the example of AUISers. AUIS is meant to be different from other educational institutions in Iraq. It is meant to be a place to develop the next generation of Iraqi and Kurdish leaders, leaders who are not like any of the existing leaders, leaders whose main goals are creating a better Iraq and Kurdistan. But lately this feature of AUIS has been facing a downward trend. If you are an AUISer, take a minute and look around you,

and then look at yourself as well. How many of those you have seen are trustworthy people? How many of them have the same original personalities where ever they go? AUISers now days are more likely to be future slanders rather than leaders. Now days it is so common in AUIS to see a student befriending another student using a fake personality, and later on talk behind their back or slandering them for no obvious reason. That makes of many AUIS students suffer from DID. To sum up this small piece of writing, we look much nicer when we are ourselves, so keep calm and have your own and only original personality. No one is in need for an alter. This way we can have better AUIS, Kurdistan and Iraq.

“
As soon as they reach their hideout, their alters take over and start to send death threats

ENVIRONMENT KEEPER-RESEARCH CENTER

DASHTY OTHMAN

As we all know the current environment of the worldwide has been polluted considerably. Therefore, a group of students in American university of Iraq- Sulaimani, (AUIS) has established the club in the name of “Environment Keepers” in 2015. They invest all their time and energy on working to serve their community through the environmental projects. Unlike most clubs that are existed in the AUIS campus and outside of that campus, this club has several sub sectors that actively work on the cleaning the environment, such as finance, publicity, E.K. Production, Research Center and other sections. Each of these subsections are designed to work for the keeping of environment based on their specific tasks.

Let’s see what is Research Center of Environment Keeper’s club and what did they do, as well as, what are they going to do?

The Research Center of Environment keeper’s club has opened by the second administration of that club since Fall of 2017. The aim of this sector is doing scientific research on the environmental issues existed in our community and showing them all to the public through the academic and analyzed data that are collected through the survey and questionnaire.

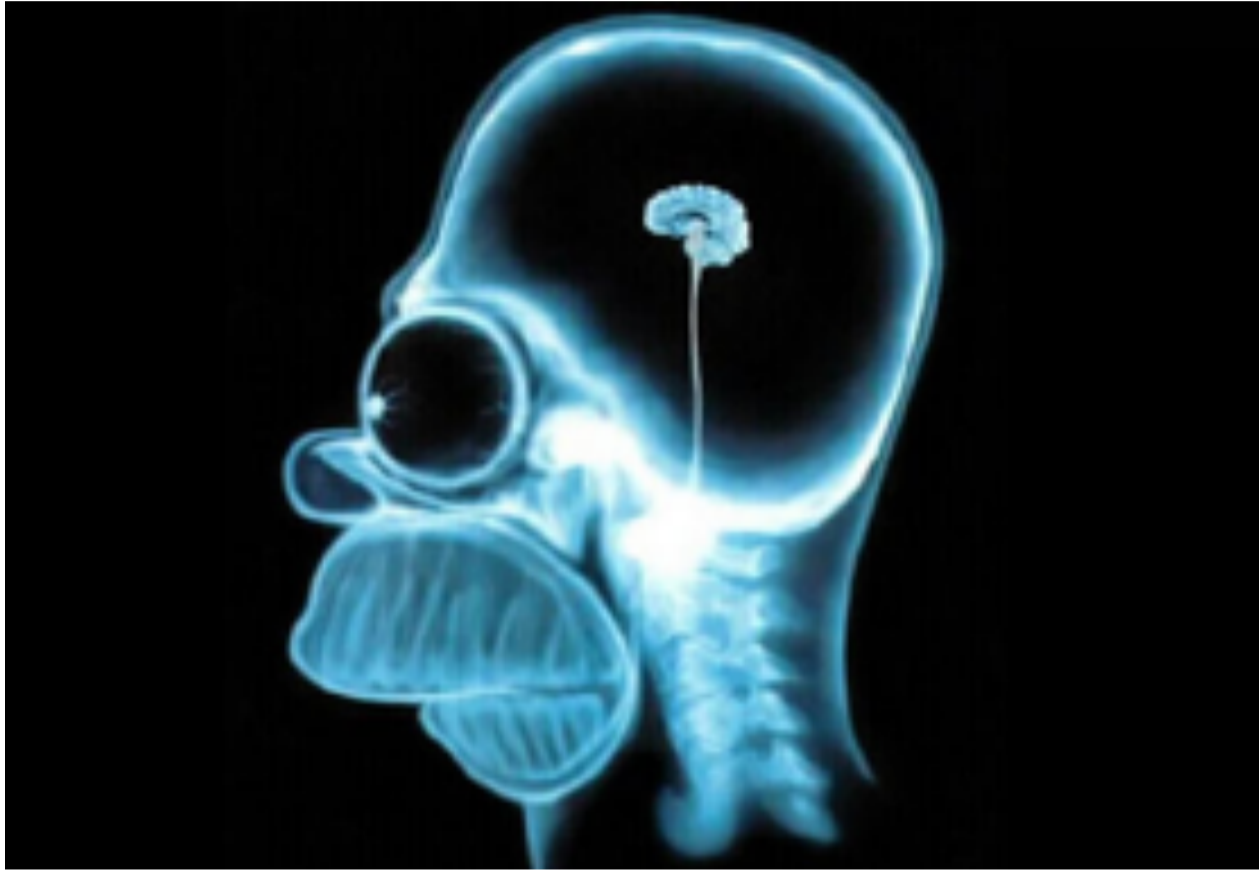
In the last two semesters, the Research Center of environment keeper’s club worked on two main projects. First of them was the “Pesticide Project”. That project was done to help one of the AUIS instructors who wanted to prepare research report on that topic.

The role of the research center in that project was collecting data about the top five sellers of pesticides. The data was collected in Erbil, Ranya, Duhok, and Sulaimani. The collected data was given in graphs to the instructor. The other project was “My Classmate” project. The aim of that project was to show the rate of plastic bottles consumption in AUIS campus in a week. Based on the data collected through the survey in AUIS Dorms and cafeterias, the rate of consuming was 17.460 plastic bottles (0.33 liters) in a week! They collected thousands of plastic bottles and created human bodies labelled the majors of AUIS and staffs meaning that we are all responsible for this huge trash thrown to the community just in one week. They also mentioned health, financial, and environmental issues

that will face each of us through using plastic bottles. Thus, they suggested reusable plastic bottles, so that we can avoid that enormous garbage from our community. The Research Center did that project in AUIS campus twice, Komar University, and in Sulaimani University, then sent all the collected plastic bottles to the factory to recycle all these plastics.

The research center of Environment keeper’s club has planned to work on E-waste project for this semester. The purpose of that project is to know how many electrical products have been thrown away by the AUIS students since the last 5 years, and showing an environmental solution or ways to deal with the disposed electrical products.

AUIS BIZZARRO



20 year old left lateral ventricle, neighboring Corpus Callosum of intelligence, consciousness, and self-awareness. Disposition: B-B1-06. Magnitude: 8:05 too late in the morning.

DAHILA HIWA

The unusual rumbling noise of my professor's headphones shook the classroom. Strangely, he demanded me to eliminate all the background sound in my mind. The displayed assorted miniature album covers of Coldplay and Ed Sheeran flickered by the pitch-black pupil of my eye through the selfie-filled black square box in my hand. Pause. "No words. No words but the words of your own, preaching that this heavenly sound of emptiness contains more depth than entire iTunes. Not because it defines correct; but because it denies it. The absolute top song of nothing but infinity: Silence."

"If you could only choose one word for the rest of your life, what would it be?" The professor stared at me. "Out of all the letters, none of them make sense! Unless they belong to a language that speaks to you. So who am I to choose 'Worry' and 'Sorrow', when in the language they mean ultimately the same

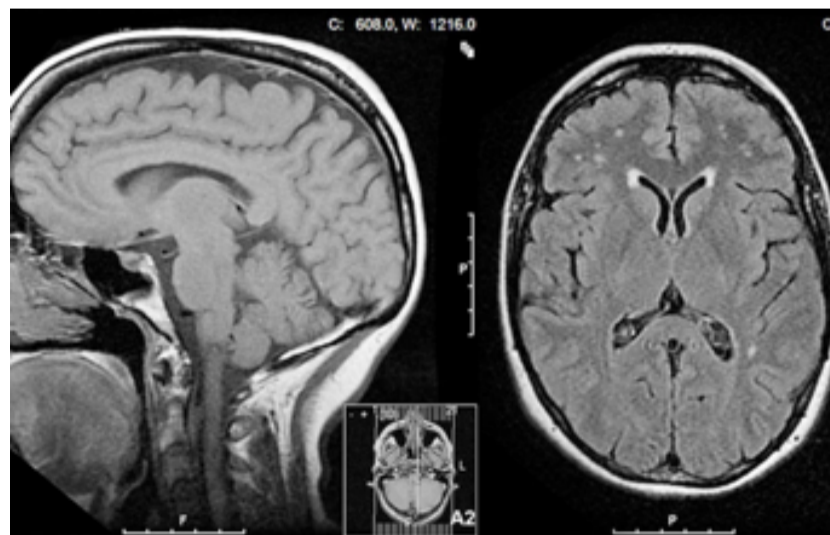
and nothing all at once? While in Chinese they never speak to your soul, because of an infinite alphabet of continuous expansion. An alphabet where lost words are never spoken. Out of all words, I choose none. For 'Silence' is the most powerful of them all."

24 presentations, all ready. He never bothered to turn on the projector. "Perhaps, this is the lesson of today which you failed to learn, too busy preparing yourselves with words of formulas inapplicable for a sphere which is intrinsically unpredictable." The Redbull on his desk and the dark circles beneath his swollen eyelids hinted tiredness.

He asked me for a tissue. I passed one over simply to watch him rip it apart. An hour wasted on presentation preparations, yet he wasted both my time and tissue while talking about appreciating trees. Hypocritical. The moment he cried, 'demonstrating' the worth of tissue as he called it, I began questioning whether or not he was still acting. He began to shout. Perhaps some-

thing was amiss.

Diagnosis: Narcissist.
Grade: F, fail



50 year old left lateral ventricle, neighboring frontal lobe of self-control, judgment and emotional regulation. Disposition: B-B1-06. Magnitude: 8:05 too early in the morning.

'Demand silence'. A repeated line in the Instructor's guide passing through one ear with an instantaneous exit through the other. Quiet, in a classroom crowded with zealous unstable temporal lobes? What a hypocrisy, preaching silence to a room with four pale

walls and consequently 24 even paler students, squeezed into a square box of capitalism. Eager to comprehend an inexplicable reality. I turn on my headphones. An excessive amount of words detained their swallowed designation of the originated utility of sound source.

An individual's eyes in the corner. What if the glance of his canthus mirrors a rough breakdown of a recently overcome despair? Is it fair to ask the same questions to the crowd of diverse faces? I ask myself a question. What about the wisdom buried in silence? What about the rather acerbic abhorrence of the remaining silent jostled in between four walls? Who am I to evoke it? I protest. "I do not want you to raise your hand. Please, lower it. Instead, reflect over unfairness imprinted onto distorted minds. I boycott the restricted persona of the ideal in which the volume of voices determines the validation of the definition of right." We tend to assume the acceptance of prime statements, as long

focuses on my unusual demeanor today. The odd thing that will silence 24 minds, is not the demand of the instructor's manual. It is the simple question, of a tissue paler than their faces and the walls of this room combined. My eyes start tearing. I tear my tissue apart, facing their shocked facades of countenance. I raise my voice. "It is not my tissue that wipes my tears, but the trees of the earth beneath my feet. Yet I step on it every day in ungrateful disgrace. Complain about the rain that ruined my day, and grew the tree in which I drown my sorrows in. We waste our tears, confident of our 70 percent water consistency. If water could only enter our bodies once, and we were born with only 10 percent of it, would you not realize the value of your sorrow? If you found out this morning that you only had one day left to live, what would you do?"

Diagnosis: Glioblastoma multiforme (GBM), brain cancer, life expectancy: 24 hours remaining
Grade: IV, astrocytoma, third stage



An individual's eyes in the corner. What if the glance of his canthus mirrors a rough breakdown of a recently overcome despair? Is it fair to ask the same questions to the crowd of diverse faces? I ask myself a question. What about the wisdom buried in silence?

as they derive from a raising hand, forgetting to ask ourselves what the best answer is.

Students stand up in rage, prepared with presentations that supposedly lost their purpose. I ask one of them for a tissue. This particular one seems odd in the way he

MALALA YOUSAFZAI: FROM AN ASSASSINATION SURVIVOR TO THE YOUNGEST NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATE

HEDI RASHEED

She was an ordinary teenage girl who had a normal life. After she woke up, she would go to school and then return back home to help her mother like any other girl. Her dream was to be a doctor. Yet, what happened later pushed her to enter the stage of politics. In 2008, Yousafzai had suggested his 11 years old daughter, Malala, to blog anonymously about her life for BBC Urdu. After the dust settled in Mingora, Yousafzai's family returned to their home. Finally, her identity was revealed in articles. That was watershed to appear on televi-

sion to promote female education. In 2011, she was awarded Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize, and that resulted in being more recognized. Later on, she received death threats through social media and newspapers that were slipped under her home's door. Eventually, threats became real. On October 9, 2012, while she was trying to board the school bus, she was stopped and shot with a bullet to her face by a Taliban gunman. After the accident, she was moved to a hospital in Peshawar. Later, Yousafzai traveled to Germany and Birmingham which has become her second home. The at-

tempt of assassination murder reached worldwide media coverage. People protested in Pakistani cities. The Pakistani government sought reactions after millions of people signed Right to Education campaign's petition. It resulted in the ratification of the first Right to Education Bill which states that the state should provide free-of-cost education to children aged 5-16. On January 2013, doctors discharged Malala from hospital to carry on her rehabilitation at home.

That phase of Malala's life was revolutionary for her future. The murder attempt did not stop her from advocating, but rather encouraged her

more. She started activism to advocate for women and young girl's education with greater support received from international organizations. In 2013, she gave a powerful and meaningful speech and said, "The extremists were, and they are, afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them. They are afraid of women... Let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons." Following her speech at UN, she published her autobiography under the name "I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban," and the book became a bestseller. In 2014, she

became the youngest Nobel Prize winner. When receiving the prize, she reminded us no matter what, her goal is stable by saying, "If I win Nobel Peace Prize, it would be a great opportunity for me, but if I don't get it, it's not important because my goal is not to get Nobel Peace Prize, my goal is to get peace and my goal is to see the education of every child." Later on, she found Malala Fund to fight for girl's education. Now, she continues to help young girls to raise their voice.

HAS NORTH KOREA ALWAYS BEEN PRONE TO GLOBAL SECURITY?

RAWEZH REBEEN

October 9th marks the 12th anniversary of the North Korea's first ever nuclear weapon test. In 2006, North Korean officials proclaimed that they have become the ninth country that have obtained nuclear weapon capabilities. Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) proudly reported that "It makes a historic event as it greatly encouraged and pleased North Korean army and people that wished to have powerful self-reliant defense capacity". Since North Korea has been a secretive state, it has been difficult for other countries to obtain

detailed information about test location and the amount of the nuke that have been radiated and tested. According to South Korean media, the test has been conducted in the North Hamgyong Province; soon after the test, the world super powers such as the United States, Britain and China condemned North Korean this action. The United Nations Security Council had warned North Korean leaders two days prior to the test that the action could lead to severe consequences. The test brought North Korea into a whole new era in which the country faced severe economic sanctions by the US that weakened Demo-

cratic People Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s economy to its lowest level. North Korean nuclear program dates back to 1956 when the Soviet Union began to train North Korean scientists and engineers, giving them basic "knowledge" to initiate a nuclear program. Then, in 1959, North Korean and the USSR signed a nuclear cooperation agreement. North Korea was successful in improving its nuclear program through previous years and somehow proved that that they are a powerful and dangerous country. North Korea's continuous efforts were helpful in creating inter-continental ballistic missiles that are capable

to carry cross-continental nuclear warheads: the most effective way to deliver nuclear bomb. DPRK has vowed, in many occasions, that they are working on long range missiles that can reach the United States mainland. Since Kim Jong-Un came to power seven years ago, more than 60 ballistic missiles have been tested. Respectively, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush were unsuccessful in stopping North Korea's nuclear program through negotiations. Tensions between US and North Korea were growing until Donald Trump and Kim Jong-Un had their historical "Singapore Summit" meeting. The summit has also

been called "Century Summit" due to its importance, in which the two leaders met and signed a joint statement; agreed to security guarantees to North Korea, new peaceful relationships, and denuclearization of the latter. Chairman Jong-Un promised US president that DPRK will halt their nuclear program, so, during the recent North Korean annual military parade in their national day, no missiles were demonstrated. Today tensions have been calmed down even though there seems to be a mutual distrust between the two countries about the slow implementation of their terms.

THE PARADOX OF CHOICE

BAWAN HOSHYAR

Choice: an act of choosing between two or more possibilities. It sounds like the perfect scenario, doesn't it? You have the power to choose your path in life without anyone forcing you into a field that will make you miserable for the rest of your life. But with great power, comes great responsibilities and even greater anxiety. In this article I will discuss how I came to choose IT as a career and what difficulties I encountered during the making of this decision. When I first came to the University, I was fixated on majoring in Engineering. The cause for this might be that our society worships certain professions, or how most of the people I looked up to in my life were in these professions. This reality put a lot of pressure on me to continue the cycle. But I was fortunate enough to study in a university where the choice you made about your career, wasn't going to be with you forever. **YOU HAD THE POWER TO CHOOSE WHAT YOU WANTED.** This concept

was certainly what made me what to do. But I put an end to

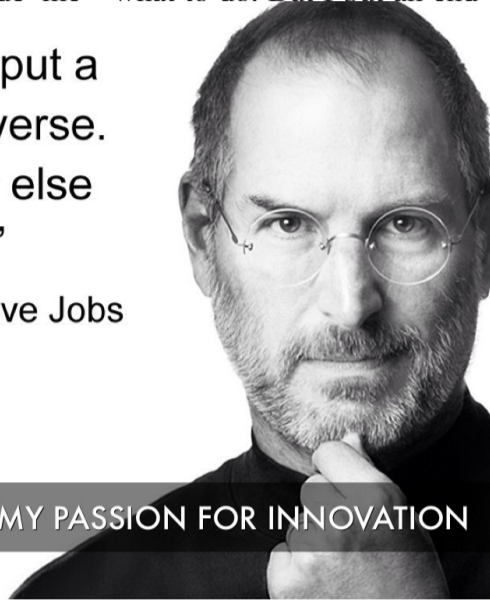
"We're here to put a dent in the universe. Otherwise why else even be here?"

~ Steve Jobs

COMPUTERS AND MY PASSION FOR INNOVATION

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feel a responsibility towards exploring other fields that I had no familiarity with whatsoever. In brief, everything was going great, but that didn't last for long. What I didn't see coming, is how the amount of choices I had made me feel lost and how anxious I was feeling during this period of my life. I didn't know how to start or where to start from. I was just sitting around thinking about

that. I decided to blindly take courses from other majors. The first two I settled on were an economics and an accounting course. Throughout the duration of these courses I realized that even though the field of business is interesting, I had no interest to pursue a career in it. I didn't find that rush of excitement that I was looking forward to. Consequently, I became very anxious during the break.

Not finding interest in my first sampling of all these choices, reminded me of all the expectation that were set for me and how I might become a disappointment after all these years of excelling in my academic life. Nonetheless, I took an IT course the semester after. Now, this was a revolutionary period for sure. I instantly fell in love with everything I encountered in that class. I got a rush every time I made a program. In fact, I wasn't satisfied with the how little the course gave me so I started to pursue knowledge outside the classroom. During the summer, I started studying an online computer science course that a friend of mine suggested. Shortly, after finishing that course, I was certain that this is the field I wanted to pursue. This is what excited me. Since then I have come a long way. Recently, I started studying for a certificate in networking and I also started taking online courses in programming alongside my university courses. After all what I have told you, you would think all

the anxiety must have gone away. I must have a clear vision by now. But that is not the case. Even though IT excites me more than anything I have ever encountered in my life, it definitely is not easy to go into a field that is completely new to me. Everything ahead of me is pitch black because I don't know how good I can be even if I am completely dedicated. I don't know which path in IT to take. But I discovered one thing, you will never be comfortable if you are improving. This haunting anxiety and the feeling of not being at ease will always come back to you, because you will always be in a position of making important decisions in your life. So, don't overthink stuff, because you will probably realize just like me, that during all the time you have spent thinking about doing something, you could have actually done it and would have had a more practical view of it.

CRISIS AND CRAVING: STORIES OF 1997

ROZA AZIZ

The First Story: The Man and Oranges

A financial crisis has cursed the city in a way that people stay hungry for most of the time. People can hardly get enough



Verywellfit.com

food to not die and live through more foodless days. Food is basically flour and each family crafted a small oven out of iron, so that they bake bread and eat it with water. If a family is very lucky, they will have yogurt or tea to eat with the bread. Because of that crisis, most people crave certain foods and that makes them to do incredible things to get those foods. One of the most famous stories is the story of the man and oranges. Because fruits are the secondary food that people eat, a buyer would put fruits in black plastic bags, so that other people will not see it and desire it. Also the buyer would eat the fruits without being worried that someone has seen the fruits he/she has bought. The woman bought a kilo of oranges and put them in a black plastic bag and told the shopkeeper "May Allah bless you". She did not know that she has

been watched by her neighbor and went home. Her neighbor had been craving for oranges for a while but could not buy them because he was very poor. He decided to visit the woman's house after dinner, so that they will serve him oranges. The poor man was the house's guest till twelve midnight to eat an orange. He did not know that the oranges are kept only for the family, since it was only one kilo of oranges not a lot. With a broken heart and a craving stomach he got up and said goodbye to the family. All of the family members sat down and opened the bag of oranges with mouth-watering and sparkling eyes. The children clapped when they saw the oranges. You can see the round shape of them was fitting to reflect in their iris eyes. It is as if the mother had found a bag of gold that none of them had the courage to touch or eat them. They just

wanted to stare at them forever, since they were sure they will not have the chance to see oranges from that close distance that soon. They thought they are in heaven till someone knocked the door and ruined their imagination. They were all surprised when they saw their neighbor is back again. He immediately put his eyes on the oranges and said "O...O...O...Olive socks, I forgot to take my olive socks." He obviously did not want to go home, he actually did not go. He just left his socks intentionally and waited outside for a few minutes till the family will take out the oranges. The family invited him to eat oranges with them, because their secret was revealed by now.

POLITICAL ISLAM HAS FAILED IN KURDISTAN

HOVAR ABDULLA

The Islamic Parties have won nearly 12 seats in the Iraqi Kurdistan Parliamentary election of 2018 altogether, while the secular parties won the majority of the votes. The Islamists have proved to be subordinated, and always an unlikely alternative, to the both secular leading parties, namely the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. The majority of the Kurds from the Iraqi Kurdistan are Muslims, yet the political Islamists have failed to collect people's votes; however AKP, the ruling-Islamic party in Turkey, is an exception, as it rules in a secularly-established country.

The Islamic movements in Kurdistan trace back to the early 1950s as Dr. Hadi Ali, former Chairman of Kurdistan Islamic Union's Political Bureau, explains after the fall of monarchy in Iraq, the Iraqi Islamic Party was formed and inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, and the Kurdish Islamic Parties were born out of the Iraqi Islamic Party. Hence, in 1980s, the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK) was formed as jihadists; and later after the 1991 uprisings, it dissolved into the Kurdistan Islamic Union (KIU) and Jund al-Islam, later

became the Kurdistan Islamic Group (KIG).

(KIU) entered the political arena in the 1992 Kurdish parliament elections as a non-jihadist political entity, while Jund al-Islam stayed on the line of Jihadism. However, in the early 2000s most of the Jund al-Islam members were slaughtered by the secular parties, and then liquidized into a non-Jihadist political party, the Kurdistan Islamic Group (KIG). As for (KIU), the party sustained their being as a non-jihadist party ever since.

Nevertheless, the Jihadist and the non-Jihadist versions of the Islamic movements have never been great, powerful and influential forces within the Kurdish political ground; their low esteem compared to a powerful ruling party a AKP divides into two major eras, the political and ideological atmosphere prior and past the 1991 uprisings.

Prior to 1991, the (IMK) have occasionally fought against the Saddam Hussein's regime beside the secular Peshmarga forces, yet they were never able to gain the mass mobilization as their Islamic ideology was barely overlapping with the ideology of Kurdish nationalism. As radical islamists, (IMK) were derived to establish an Islamic state where Kurdish identity



The logos of Islamic Union, Islamic Group, Islamic Movement of Kurdistan

would be altered to an Islamic identity, while the Kurdish society demanded an established Kurdish government built around the Kurdish nationalism. Most recently, the Islamic State (Daesh) took over parts of Syria and Iraq and reached as far as Makhmoor, a town near Erbil in the hope of creating a unified Islamic State that was the dream of most of the Muslims; on the other hand, the Islamic Parties in the Kurdistan Region were under the pressure of the Kurdish government, political parties and society to not only oppose the Daesh's ideology but to hold arms against them, too.

The other reason to the unpopularity of the Islamic Movements in the region is the contradiction and clashes of ideologies within the different Islamic movements in Kurdistan after the uprisings of 1991. The lack of ideological unification within the Islamists in Kurdistan created a ground where the two sides and the supporters of them were in a political paradigm. KIU's agenda have revolved around a more lenient Islamism, while (IMK) and (KIG) are adhered to a more radical version, each to a different and inconsistent extent. And later on, the consequence of the clash appeared

in the results of the latest election, which were not satisfactory enough.

In my perspective, I would think, regardless of their power in the political arena, the Islamic parties' fashion will be assistive in the creation of totalitarian regimes, such as the one of Iran. For instance, the short-termed ruling of the Ansar al-Islam in the Halabja and Hawraman provinces in the late 1990s and early 2000s led to imposing Islamic values on their people, while they are norms now, they were firstly took root through force.



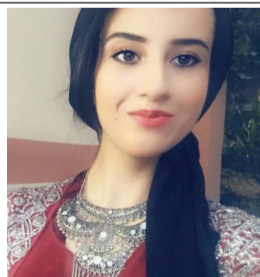
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