

## Constructing the Kurds in the Turkish press: a case study of *Hürriyet* newspaper

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While news media research has tended to focus on coverage of minorities within the West, few studies have examined the Middle Eastern media's representations of non-dominant groups. Among the most noted such groups is the Kurds, a minority in multiple countries, whose status has been raised globally by its involvement in both the first and second Gulf wars, yet whose construction by the media of the Kurds' home countries is virtually unexplored. This study examines coverage of the Kurds within Turkey as an important case study of the social construction of minorities. The coverage by Turkey's biggest daily, *Hürriyet*, is seen as representative of the main ideology and the discursive struggles of Turkey's elite to articulate the Kurdish identity. Such an examination can help provide a context for understanding the Kurdish conflict in Turkey, which has resulted in almost 20 years of civil war, and is also significant in the context of Turkey's changing relationship with the European Union, which requires Turkey to meet certain political criteria in order to become an EU member, including protecting its minorities and allowing them freedom to exercise their culture.

### **The Kurds in Turkey**

Turkey's 15 million Kurds comprise the country's second largest ethnic group and Kurds make up the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East, after Arabs, Persians and Turks, numbering between 18 and 25 million and inhabiting an area that overlaps Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria (Bulloch and Morris, 1992; Olson, 1996). The Kurds occupied land within what is today called Turkey long before the modern Turkish identity was established. When the Ottoman Empire collapsed in 1923, it was replaced with a new republic that identified itself with a secular national Turkish identity rather than religion (Ahmad, 1991). The founder of this Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (*Atatürk* means 'Father of the Turks'),

saw religion as a barrier and an obstacle to development. Therefore, he removed Islam from political discourse and separated state and church.

In the new state structure, still in place, any identity conflicting with the national state identity – based solely on Turkish culture, language and identity – is not accepted and faces punishment under criminal law (İçduygu et al., 1999). Since the inception of the Republic, Kurdish existence has always been denied, and Kurds have been forced to assimilate into the dominant culture (Kirisçi and Winrow, 1997). Although their numbers are larger than those of any other minority, Kurds do not have the same rights. Today, there are significant differences in social and economic standards and opportunities between the southeast (Kurdish homelands) and other parts of Turkey where the population is mainly Turkish. In the mid-1990s, the western region's per capita gross national product was US \$2000 and that of the Kurdish region was US \$700 (İçduygu et al., 1999). When there are opportunities for investment, the Kurdish areas are not a priority.

Since the inception of the Republic, the Kurds have always rebelled against Turkey (Cemal, 2003; White, 2000). The most recent conflict lasted almost 20 years and was considered by some a civil war because there was armed struggle in the region between Turkish soldiers and the *Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* (PKK – Kurdish Workers Party) almost every day (Cemal, 2003). (The PKK was founded in the 1980s as a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement, but later became a Kurdish nationalist movement [White, 2000; Yavuz, 1999].) The civil war (1980–99) took 35,000 lives, and ended when the PKK leader, Abdullah Öcalan, was captured in Kenya. The PKK in no way can be seen as representative of all Kurds; they killed many civilians, including Kurdish intellectuals who criticized their violence (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

On a social level, it is common to see mixed marriages among Kurds and Turks (Hosgör and Smits, 2002). It is difficult to differentiate between Kurds and Turks in terms of physical qualities. The only indicator might be a person's accent when speaking Turkish. But being open about being Kurdish is not recommended if one wants to work, especially for the government (McDowall, 1992). Still, there are many Kurdish people working in government and the mainstream parties of Turkey because they blend into the dominant ideology and culture of the country (Kutlay, 2002). Most of the time, it is difficult to determine the percentage of Kurds in any professional field: most would refrain from mentioning their background for fear of discrimination or fear of being misunderstood (Kutlay, 2002). Those who blend in are able to hold positions in the highest offices of the government.

To some extent, the Kurds of Turkey are similar to the Basques of Spain. Not every Basque supports the violent actions of the ETA (*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* – Basque Homeland and Freedom). In May 1995, the EU offered the case of the Basques an example to Turkey in terms of granting rights of cultural self-expression and giving some political and administrative autonomy to the Kurds (Kirisçi and Winrow, 1997). Turkey's bid to become a member of the European Union (EU) – it achieved candidacy status in 1999 – has started a new era for the country. If it wants to become an EU member, it must improve its treatment of the Kurds and give them more freedom, proving to the EU that it respects the diversity and the human rights of non-Turks (Cemal, 2003; Kutlay, 2002).

### **The Turkish media scene**

This study analyzed news article coverage of Kurds from 1997 to 2002 in *Hürriyet*, the biggest newspaper in Turkey with a daily circulation of 489,000 and the highest advertising revenues of all the major Turkish newspapers in this market (Ceylan

Investment, 2002). It is owned by Dogan Inc., which, along with Sabah Inc., serves 75 percent of the Turkish readership (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Since liberalization measures were introduced in the 1980s, Turkey's media scene has greatly expanded. Ogan (2003) reports that there are more than 20 national daily newspapers, 3500 dailies or weeklies and more than 100 magazines. Access to satellite television and other media originating outside the country is widely available. At the same time, local media companies such as Dogan now run media empires in Turkey, spanning print and electronic media (Finkel, 2000; Sahin and Aksoy, 1993). A few individual channels and newspapers are controlled by smaller firms, but conglomerate control is a major problem (Ogan, 2003).

Within the context of these changes, the press has become an important political tool, not just for government officials but for corporate owners; it is characterized as both lively and critical of the powers that be while also sometimes contributing to a climate that fosters human rights violations (Alat, 2004; Finkel, 2000; Najjar, 2004; Tunc, 2002). As Algan notes, the 'state chooses to ignore monopolistic practices of these new media corporations, as long as their broadcasts do not conflict with the state's official stance on critical issues such as the Kurdish struggle' (2003: 188). Turkish law protects freedom of expression in the press with some restrictions but those rights are unevenly enforced (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Self-censorship is imposed when sensitive issues, especially involving Kurds, are covered (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

The five-year time period of the study – 1997–2002 – was chosen because it covers two important periods: the last years of civil war between the PKK and the Turkish Army and the immediate post-civil war period. The capture of the PKK leader Öcalan in 1999 officially ended the civil war (Cemal, 2003). In the same year, Turkey gained candidacy status to the European Union. The articles were collected through a keyword search using *Hürriyet's* web page search engine. The keywords – Kurd and Kurdish – produced 400 stories from which every third article was systematically sampled. All news articles (commentaries and columnists are not included here) longer than 100 words were included, giving a total of 121 articles. The research questions posed here are: How is Kurdish identity constructed in Turkish newspaper coverage? In what ways has that identity changed within the context of two recent watershed events in Turkey: the country's civil war and its bid for admittance into the European Union?

The study employed Van Dijk's (1983, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1997a, 1997b, 1998) critical discourse analysis techniques. The following analytical categories were used: *Topics* and *Sub-topics* (main events, or subjects of discussion); *Language* (verbs, adjectives and phrases used to describe the Kurds); *Background* information about the Kurds; and *Sources* in coverage of the Kurds.

### **Constructing the Kurds**

Analysis revealed that coverage of the Kurds falls under six main topics and several subtopics. These main topics are: the EU membership criteria for Turkey; the danger of the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq; the PKK and the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan; crime; cultural activities; illegal Kurdish immigrants in Europe. Each of these is discussed below with subtopics, sources and emerging patterns noted.

#### *The EU membership criteria for Turkey*

Most of the articles fell under this topic, Turkey's attempt to meet the EU criteria for recognizing the rights of the Kurds, suggesting that if the EU had not

intervened, the Kurds would have been virtually ignored by the mainstream press. This topic consists of four sub-areas: cultural rights for Kurds; the Kurdish language; the so-called 'Kurdish issue'; and Kurdish political parties.

*Cultural rights for Kurds* The EU calls for allowing Kurdish broadcasting and education in Kurdish in schools, or at least in private educational institutions. In the coverage, these issues are presented as offensive and divisive of the country. Kurds are depicted as against the Turkish government, with never ending demands, or as criminals involved with the PKK. Coverage frames any expression of these rights as criminal or an indication of the EU's adversarial feelings towards Turkey.

Government officials comment on cultural rights for Kurds while Kurds are not the sources for any of these discussions. Kurdish broadcasting and education are presented as something only the EU wants. The beneficiaries of these rights, the Kurds, are invisible and thus coverage tends to undermine their existence and voices. For instance, in 1998, the French foreign affairs minister raised the question with the Turkish foreign affairs minister saying, 'You should improve the situation of Kurds by giving them rights to practice their culture' (Gürcanlı, 1998: para. 1). The Turkish foreign affairs minister answered, saying, 'By raising this issue, you are hurting the feelings of the Turkish nation' (Gürcanlı, 1998: para. 1). There is almost no background information on why Kurds need such rights or why it hurts the feelings of the Turkish nation to raise the issue. Another article reported:

Vice Prime Minister Devlet Bahçeli is expected to give this message in the National Security Council meeting: Television broadcasting in Kurdish, Kurdish being an elective course in schools, and its usage as an education language will damage the national unity of the country. ('MGK'nin Gündemi Kürtçe', 2002: para. 5)

On similar lines, another articles notes:

The Justice Minister Hikmet Sami Türk has said that it could not be even dared to suggest we have education in the Kurdish language; it is against our constitution . . . the official language of education is Turkish . . . there is no ban on Kurdish . . . anybody can talk Kurdish; we are not forbidding it' ('Kürtçe Yasagi yok ki, 2000: para. 2)

In other stories, cultural rights for Kurds are presented as divisive and inspired by the PKK, or as a result of the EU's provocations. For example:

[P]arliamentarian Somuncuoğlu has said that: 'The EU's demand of giving cultural rights to Kurds is suggesting we be divided and behind it there is the PKK . . . in cooperation with the EU . . . rather than explaining our realities to the EU that we cannot allow these rights, our attitude is submissive and we show weakness of character.' ('Karsiyiz Ama Saygiliyiz', 2002: para. 5)

No background information is offered, such as in what ways and how Kurdish broadcasting and education can damage national unity, or why the EU requires these standards, which other member countries follow without damaging their national unity. The issue is introduced as something the EU wishes to use to divide Turkey. As another news article noted:

Kurds are not a minority according to the Lausanne Treaty. . . . According to the Lausanne Treaty, only non-Muslims are a minority. . . . Communication of

these issues to the Turkish Government created great discomfort among the officials. . . . The government has informed the EU official, Günter Verheugen, that Turkey is not like Western Europe; there are no race differences among people who live in Turkey. ('Ağır ev ödevi', 2000: paras 3, 4, 5)

These examples suggest that cultural rights for Kurds are constructed as an adversarial agenda against Turkey. The articles never quote Kurds themselves about the issue. The only sources are from the government, so the issue is mostly told from the government's point of view. Even the EU's reason for requiring cultural rights for Kurds is explained in only a few of the articles.

Presenting issues as divisive and PKK-related leaves no room for any discourse about the democratic right to broadcast or teach in Kurdish. For instance, when Kurdish students used their constitutional rights to petition universities for an elective Kurdish language course, articles depict the non-violent submission of 10,000 signatures to the directors of Turkish universities as follows: 'The police have warned that the education in Kurdish campaign is nothing but an effort of the terrorist organization the PKK' ('Emmniyet'ten PKK', 2002: paras 1, 2). Another article noted:

The education in Kurdish demand is nothing but an agenda to divide Turkey . . . some groups of criminals (petitioners) are rebelling against our government . . . they are part of a murder gang. After all the terror we have experienced, they have the blood of thousands on their hands. (Sen and İnsan, 2002: paras 1, 2)

The tone of the articles suggests that these Kurdish students are guilty, although they have not been put on trial for the accusations by the government. The articles present the students' guilt as an accepted fact and suggest that 10,000 students, including some from the most prominent universities in Turkey, support the PKK. The students who presented the petitions were not interviewed.

*Kurdish is not a language* Elites quoted in the coverage attempt to discredit the Kurdish language. One article notes, 'Prime minister Ecevit said . . . not all of the Kurdish background citizens even speak Kurdish anyway' ('Ecevit: İdam Kalkabilir', 2002: para. 9). Accusing the people who want Kurdish of not being able to speak it doesn't take into account that the ban on speaking Kurdish was lifted only in 1991. As a result of that ban, many generations grew up without having the chance to learn their mother tongue.

Another article discredits the need for Kurdish TV with scientific data: 'The percentage of those who want Kurdish TV is 9.7 percent' ('Kürtçe Yayın', 2001: para. 1). The article outlines survey research conducted by a think-tank in Turkey; 1314 Kurds who moved out of the southeastern region of Turkey and now reside in other regions were surveyed.

They have been asked: would you like to go back to where you came from? 85 percent of the participants answered NO. . . . These people who live outside the southeastern region of Turkey say there is no need for Kurdish TV. . . . Kurdish TV is not a must. . . . The survey also revealed that most of the Kurds do not speak Kurdish. . . . The percentage of people who speak Kurdish is decreasing day by day . . . if they want to have good employment and advance in their lives they have to learn Turkish. . . . Only 10 percent of those surveyed only speak Kurdish; the others are able to speak Turkish or do not speak Kurdish at all. . . . The participants identified their biggest difficulties as unemployment (28.37 percent) and adaptation to the culture (26.24 percent) in the areas to which they have moved. ('Kürtçe Yayın', 2001: paras 1, 4, 6, 8)

This study is presented as objective science, but it leaves out that the 9 million Kurds living in southeastern Turkey mainly speak Kurdish (İçduygu et al., 1999). Also, the biggest problems expressed by the survey participants were adaptation and unemployment. If Kurds had cultural programs of their own, in their own language, maybe they would have found themselves more easily oriented towards the culture and more successful in school, which is primarily in Turkish, and as a result have obtained better employment.

*The 'Kurdish issue' in Turkey* Overall, articles deny the political problems faced by Kurds in Turkey and suggest instead the problem is terrorism. 'There is no Kurdish problem in Turkey which needs a political solution. Turkey has a terror problem' ('Kürt Sorunu Yok', 1999: para. 5). In an article about a former CIA agent launching his new book, he is quoted as saying: 'Kurds in Turkey should feel lucky because they have the advantage of living in a pretty stable country. . . . it is better for Kurds if they stop complaining about being victims' ('Kürtler özgür', 1999: para. 4). Another pattern identifies Kurds as 'enemies of the state'. Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, those who want religious rule in the country as well as the Kurds have been seen as against the main ideology of the government: Kemalism. Kurds are mentioned quite often in the articles with the connotation that they are enemies of state, like the Islamists who want a return of the *sheria*.

Those who do not even speak Turkish, and have not even an elementary school education and read the prayers in Kurdish . . . the government is not able to communicate with them . . . therefore the Hizbullah abuses this fertile ground with religious rhetoric. ('Subay Imam önerisi', 2001: paras 2, 5, 7)

It should be noted that Kurds have strong leftist ties (for example the HADEP is a leftist party). The portrayal of their identity as similar to religious fundamentalists puts them in the same category as Islamists, as enemies of secularism. It should be noted, too, that among Kurds there could be people who support religious fundamentalists, as is the situation among the Turks or, indeed, any group. But stating, 'Those who do not even speak Turkish, and do not have even an elementary school education and read the prayers in Kurdish' ('Subay Imam önerisi', 2001: para. 7), suggests that Kurds are ignorant and the reason for their ignorance is associated with not being able to speak Turkish.

*The Kurdish political party HADEP* The Kurdish political party HADEP abides by the laws just like any other political party in the country. It gets votes mostly from Kurds and represents its own Kurdish constituents. Yet HADEP is also associated with the PKK. The party was banned by the Constitutional Court in 2003. The EU is actively involved in discussions of this issue, reminding Turkey that HADEP denies any links with the PKK. Among the articles about HADEP, in only one was someone from the party actually quoted. In the others, the sources were other political parties and Turkish government officials. The coverage constructs HADEP as a 'racist' and a PKK-related party. 'Democracy and Peace Party's leader (DBP) Yılmaz Çamlıbel said that the HADEP is a racist party' ('HADEP'e Rakip Geliyor, 2001: para. 3). Today, HADEP runs more than 30 municipalities in the south-eastern part of Turkey, even though the government banned the party.

#### *The danger of the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq*

Another topic was the danger of the establishment of a possible Kurdish state in northern Iraq. Such stories describe the Turkish government's fear of a possible

Kurdish state. Thus, northern Iraq becoming a Kurdish state is represented negatively, but there is no background information as to why it is bad. The silence echoes the unspoken fear that Turkey's estimated 15 million Kurds would want to join that state (White, 2000). A subtopic was Turkomans in northern Iraq.

In the articles that fell under this topic, the government rhetoric about the establishment of a possible Kurdish state in northern Iraq was especially evident. For example, articles note, 'the Kurdish state is the reason for war' (Ergan, 2001) or describe 'fear and suspicion of a Kurdish state' (Sarikaya, 1998: para. 1). Some of the articles expressed this fear by blaming the US, which is perceived as having the power to establish such a state. An article noted that 'Turkey will ask the USA to answer its question about a Kurdish state and will absolutely convey that it will never allow a Kurdish state' ('Talabani ve Barzani', 1998: para. 3). The question of why it is feared was left unexplained.

*Turkomans in northern Iraq.* In almost all the articles that talk about northern Iraq and the threat of a Kurdish state, the Turkomans are mentioned. The articles depict the Turkomans as the same race as the Turks, which suggests that the definition of a Turkish citizen is based on ethnicity rather than citizenship. An article reports that 'A commission set up by the northern Iraq parliament has published Kurdish books for Kurdish school children and Turkish books for Turkish children and distributed them' (Dörtkardes, 1999: para. 13).

#### *The PKK and the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan*

The time period of this study includes the last years of the civil war during which the PKK was very much a part of news coverage. The study found that the sources were mostly government officials and foreign newspapers; few of the stories had the PKK as a source. Foreign newspapers may have been used as sources because Italy was considering granting the PKK leader political asylum rather than extraditing him to Turkey. As a result, European newspapers (including a newspaper described by the articles as the PKK's newspaper) that supported Turkey and took a stand against the PKK and Abdullah Öcalan were cited to legitimize the position of Turkey and that it was not alone in its stand. Abdullah Öcalan has been held responsible for the loss of 30,000 lives during the civil war and was sentenced to life imprisonment. Evidence indicates he is guilty of many heinous crimes (Cemal, 2003). In the articles, emotional language is used to describe the PKK leader such as: 'Leader of dividers . . . baby murderer terrorist' ('The Guardian: Terörist Öcalan', 1998: para. 1). The words used to describe him are inflammatory. In some stories regarding Öcalan, European newspapers are used as sources, suggesting that Abdullah Öcalan is considered a terrorist by Europe as well. 'The English magazine 'Spectator' called . . . Abdullah Öcalan a criminal . . . and said he gave more than 40 orders to murder with no reason ('İngiliz Dergisi', 1998: para. 1, 4). 'The Guardian newspaper wrote that Abdullah Öcalan is "the most dangerous man on earth" . . . the man who worked the most to divide Turkey.' The newspaper also stated that Öcalan is responsible for the deaths of 30,000 people, including teachers and Kurds themselves' ('The Guardian: Terörist Öcalan', 1998: para. 1).

#### *Crime*

The few crime stories were mostly related to speaking or writing in Kurdish, with headlines such as 'Town of Çınar's Mayor is under investigation because of his

public announcement in Kurdish about a movie event' (Durukan, 2001: para. 1). Two of the articles report on a murder committed by a Kurd in western Turkey where the majority of the population is Turkish. Articles, which reported that after the incident people in the town attacked Kurdish businesses, include interviews with a range of citizens, and mostly presented a balanced view.

#### *Cultural activities, Kurdish intellectuals*

Articles about cultural activities present them as either something forbidden or as associated with the PKK. Kurdish intellectuals who actively express their Kurdish identity are represented negatively, while the government's perspective is dominant in the stories. Under this category there are two subtopics: (a) cultural activities (b) Kurdish intellectuals.

*Cultural activities.* Two articles were about a concert by the music group, Kardes Türküler, which sings in the languages of different ethnic minorities in Turkey. The group is led by prominent Kurdish musicians.

Kardes Türküler was established 12 years ago by Bosphorus University students (the most prestigious university in Turkey); their purpose is to remind us that many different ethnicities lived as brothers in Anatolia for many years. . . . Because this is their purpose, from time to time they face difficulties . . . when they sing in the Armenian, Azeri, Laz, and Circassian languages, they do not face any problems. But in their last album called, 'Dogu', when they sang in Kurdish and made a music video for one of their Kurdish songs they were censored by TV channels. (Yedig, 2000: para. 5)

Overall, the articles about this music group accept Kurdish culture and criticize the fact their music video was censored. But the article leaves out any explanation of the reasons for censorship by the TV networks. There are neither any interviews with TV executives nor any kind of background information presented about why the networks decided not to air the music video. Coverage states that when they sang in Kurdish the group faced problems, which is true, but the reasons behind the problem were not explained.

#### *Illegal Kurdish immigrants in Europe*

In articles about illegal immigrants to European countries, Kurdish immigrants are singled out, even though most are not Turkish Kurds but from northern Iraq and Syria. The framework in the articles is: the Kurds are creating problems everywhere – even in Europe. For example, 'Illegal Kurdish immigrants create a big worry in Europe including countries like Germany and France . . . Austria is taking precautions' ('Avrupa'da mülteci', 1998: paras 1, 4). 'Most of the immigrants are Syrian Kurds. . . . Syria is encouraging its own Kurds to leave the country so it can be rid of them' ('Fransa'dan mültecilere', 2001: para. 5). The ships in which Kurds arrive illegally in Europe carry many immigrants. Neither background information about the situation of these immigrants, nor any other



humanitarian side of the story is given. There is no explanation of why Turkish Kurds would ask for political asylum in Europe.

## Conclusion

This study found no significant changes in the coverage of Kurds before and after 1999, when Turkey gained EU candidacy status and was required to improve conditions for its minorities. Kurds generally were covered by newspapers because of pressure from foreign entities – the EU and the US, for example – bringing up the subject of cultural rights, the possible establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq, and EU countries' dealings with illegal Kurdish immigrants. Had these foreign sources not intervened, the Kurds would have been virtually ignored. This indicates that without outside pressure, the government probably would not raise Kurdish issues, nor acknowledge the existence of Kurds. In this study, media reproduction and justification of the government stand accords the ruling elite a dominant position and helps it maintain the unequal position of Kurds in Turkish social life. Ultimately, Kurds are kept silent in media coverage (discussion is 'about' them not 'with' them), are mostly associated with terrorism (the PKK), and are portrayed as divisive and as putting forth unreasonable demands.

The framework of the coverage is very nationalistic and regards Kurds as enemy others, belittling and discrediting their existence and cultural values. Previous studies of the Turkish press have also found that the Turkish media in general tend to define the nation via perceived internal and external threats (Yumul and Ozkirimli, 2000). The coverage here then justifies the main ideology of the state. Only elitist perspectives on the issues are presented, and news articles take sides along these lines. There is no critical questioning of the facts presented by the government, and sources are not balanced.

The choice of words used by journalists to describe Kurds suggests bias. Kurds do not have the same influence on the media as do members of the elite, who represent and suggest continuity of intolerant behavior against the country's Kurdish citizens. Democratic behavior by Kurds is presented as deviant. The deviance is not what they do lawfully or unlawfully; it is their Kurdishness and the activities in which they engage in expressing it. It makes no significant difference whether or not an identity-expressing activity is within the law; the presentation of all such activities is 'divisive of the country' and possibly a 'terrorist activity'. The situation Kurds face and the results thereof are commonly described by the phrase 'the Kurdish problem', which constructs the people as a problem for the state. The government's part in this problem is almost always ignored in news stories. The critical question is this: Does the government create problems for its Kurds? Or, as presented, do Kurds create problems for the government? This is not sufficiently answered in the articles.

In sum, the coverage has been discriminatory towards Kurds and used a degrading tone in describing them. It suggests that their culture is not worthy of respect and even constructed an image that it is arguable whether their language and culture are real entities. Representing a minority like this, which in turn influences people's perception of that minority, creates an oppressive environment for that group and misleads the public. The news coverage is not serving to build bridges between different cultures but continues to reaffirm and reproduce prejudices, and helps maintain one group's superiority over the other. The findings demonstrate that the coverage was an indirect tool of oppression rather than an agency of change that challenged the prejudices and hostility towards Kurds by the country's elites.

## Note

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