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Editorial

When a new journal occurs into the realm of previously overloaded academic publications, the first question that reaches mind is: Why is this new journal required while there are various decent journals published by well-known scholars? The prompt response to this question is: There is a difference between this journal and similar ones because it is not definitely in the realm of the so-called *Kurdish Studies*.

The term 'Kurdish Studies' has numerous significations. When the signifier 'Kurdish Studies' is raised, the signified which is appeared in a reader's mind is 'Kurdistan as a study object'. It means that Kurdistan is a study object for 'others', often with colonial intentions. Kurdistan seemingly is an unknown entity, which should be known by them throughout applying scientific methods for providing some political interests of other nations. Perhaps someone says: There are also Arabian, Iranian and Turkish studies as disciplines at some famous universities. However, there is an issue with this kind of argument; Kurdistan is not an independent country with a sovereign state. The condition of being subaltern causes that the study of Kurdistan

should be categorized as the so-called *Subaltern Studies*. “Subalternity” can be defined as a condition of subordination brought about by colonization or other forms of economic, social, racial, and cultural dominance, so the subaltern studies relate to the conditions of Kurdish nation’s life. Subaltern studies are disciplines for the study of exploitation and power relations amongst human groups, particularly nations, classes and genders.

The most significant point, regarding this issue, is that after the declaration of political independence, the state of subalternity will not be promptly eradicated. The unequal power relations amongst the Kurdish nation and the surrounding nations will continue after the independence of Kurdistan due to the deep structures produced by more than two hundred years of the colonialism by the neighboring nations.

So as critical analysts, we believe that critical approaches should be applied for the study of Kurdish society. However, nowadays, the Kurdish Studies are dominated by an instrumental reason; a reason that studies Kurdistan in order to provide the interests of other nations. Such instrumental reason analyses Kurdistan as a traditional society trapped in nomadic and feudal relations. In fact, the Kurdish society has been changing dramatically during the past century and Kurdistan is not a backward feudal society any longer. The complicated socioeconomic relations at regional and global levels have changed Kurdistan throughout the second half of twentieth century and they have uprooted feudal mode of production which was recalled the main feature of this society.

Nowadays, instead of the feudal and aristocratic social classes, we should deal with comprador bourgeoisie as the core social class that reproduces the colonial relations. As one of the Kurdish

scholars makes a joke, nowadays, the Kurdish ruling class does not sell sheep at local market but sells oil at global market!

Therefore, the critical theory with all its significations rises again. What do we mean by the 'critical theory'? The critical theory, as it is defined here on the basis of critical reason, in contrast with the instrumental reason, means "to reveal the mechanisms of dominance". Although Such a definition continues the critical tradition from Frankfurt School on, it is not limited to it and considers the interests and perspectives of the Kurdish nation because today Kurdistan is one of the most important centers of a struggle for emancipation; from combatting regional imperialism to the struggle against male chauvinism, Islamic fundamentalism and other forms of superstition and subordination.

Besides, the Kurds should not consider themselves as study object anymore, they should claim that they are subjects. It means that afterwards instead of dealing with Kurdistan as an object, the Kurdish scholars should study their society and the other parts of the region and the world from a Kurdish perspective in order to provide Kurdistan's interests.

The aim of the *Journal of Middle Eastern Research* is to raise a Kurdish approach to humanities encompassing Kurdistan and the other parts of the region. Of course, it does not mean that the journal welcomes only the Kurdish writers; it means that the journal will adopt a Kurdish approach to humanities and practice them in the interests of the Kurdish nation and human kind.