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Tuzhurmatu Türkmenleri: Bir Başarı Hikayesi

The Tuzhurmatu Turkmens: A Success Story

Ortadoğu Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi
Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies

ORSAM

The Tuzhurmatu Turkmens:
A SUCCESS STORY

Report No: 6

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Strategic Information Management and Independent Thought Production

CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES

History

In Turkey, the shortage of research on the Middle East grew more conspicuous than ever during the early 90's. The Iraqi Research Institute was established in May 30, 2002 in order to provide relevant information to the general public and to the foreign policy community.
On March 19, 2004, the institute expanded its research domains and its name was changed to "The Global Strategy Institute." The institute then underwent an intensive re-structuring process, beginning to concentrate exclusively on Middle Eastern, and was renamed the Middle East Strategic Research Center (ORSAM) on November 01, 2008. ORSAM's research is sponsored by the Turkmeneli Cooperation and Culture Foundation.

Outlook on the Middle Eastern World

It is certain that the Middle East harbors a variety of interconnected problems. However, neither the Middle East nor its people ought to be stigmatized by images with negative connotations. Given the strength of their populations, Middle Eastern states possess the potential to activate their inner dynamics in order to begin peaceful mobilizations for development. Respect for people's willingness to live together, respect for the sovereign rights of states and respect for basic human rights and individual freedoms are the prerequisites for assuring peace and tranquility, both domestically and internationally. In this context, Turkey must continue to make constructive contributions to the establishment of regional stability and prosperity in its vicinity.

ORSAM's Think-Tank Research

ORSAM, provides the general public and decision-making organizations with enlightening information about international politics in order to promote a healthier understanding of international policy issues and to help them to adopt appropriate positions. In order to present effective solutions, ORSAM supports high quality research by intellectuals and researchers that are competent in a variety of disciplines. ORSAM's strong publishing capacity transmits meticulous analyses of regional developments and trends to the interested parties. With its web site, its books, reports, and periodicals, ORSAM supports the development of Middle Eastern literature on a national and international scale. ORSAM facilitates the sharing of knowledge and ideas with the Turkish and international communities by inviting statesmen, bureaucrats, academics, strategists, businessmen, journalists and NGO representatives to Turkey.

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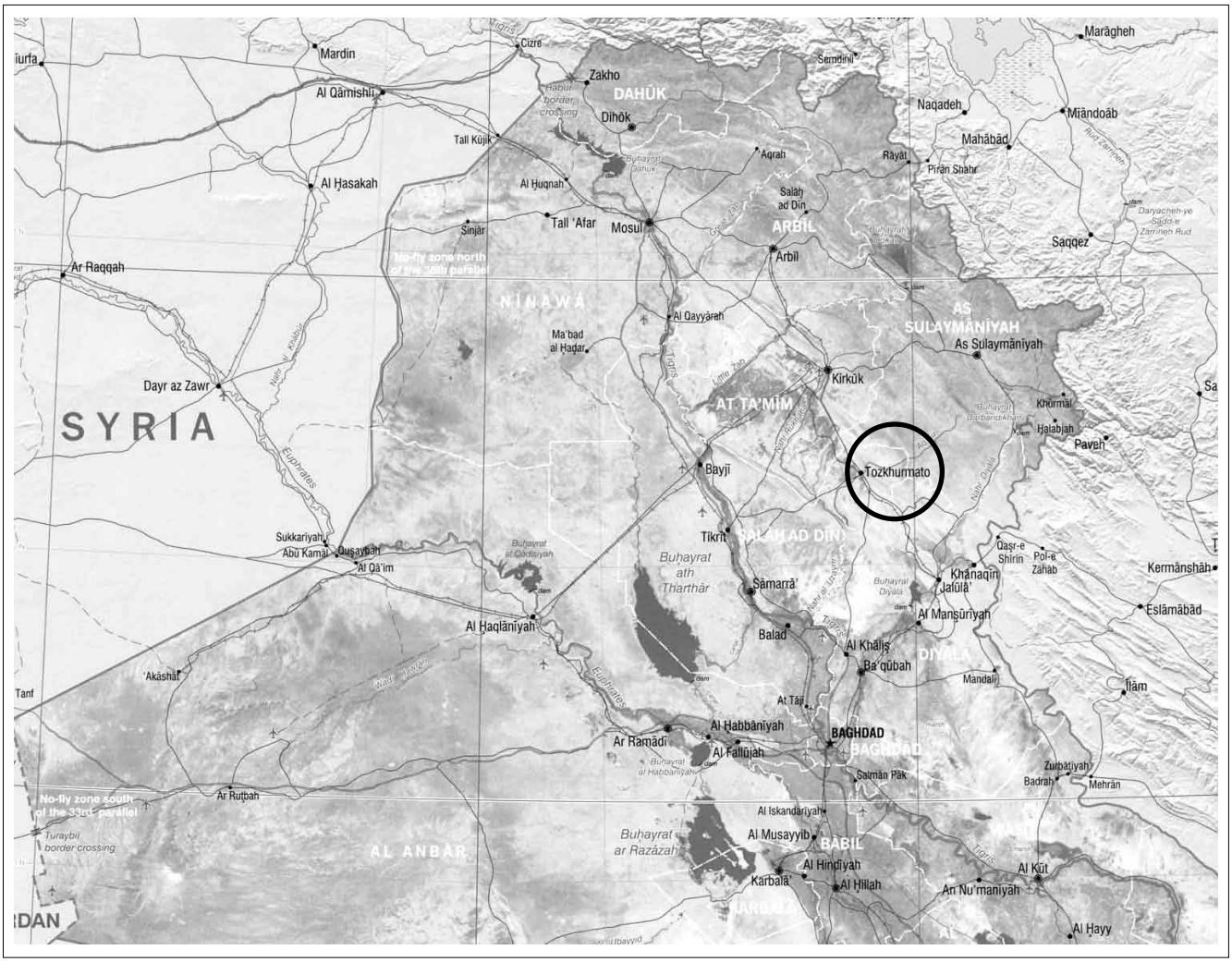
Mardin
Cizre
Zakho
DAHŪK
Dihōk
Al Qāmishlī
Tall Kūjik
Al Ḥasakah
Al Ḥuqnah
Tall 'Afar
Mosul
Sinjār
Ar Raqqah
No-fly zone north of the 36th parallel
NĪNAWĀ
Al Qayyārah
Ma'bad al Ḥadar
Dayr az Zawr
SYRIA
Euphrates
Sukkarīyah
Abū Kamāl
Qusaybah
Al Qā'im
Al Ḥaqlānīyah
'Akāshāt
Tanf
Ar Ruṭbah
No-fly zone south of the 33rd parallel
Turaybil border crossing
AL ANBAR
Buḥayrat al Qādisīyah
Buḥayrat ath Tharthār
Tikrīt
Sāmarrā'
Balad
Bayjī
Kirkūk
AT TA'MĪM
ARBĪL
Arbīl
Salāḥ ad Dīn
Aqrah
Rāyat
Pīrān Shahr
Naqadeh
Mahābād
Mīāndoāb
Saqqez
Marāgheh
Sanandaj
AS SULAYMĀNĪYAH
As Sulaymānīyah
Khurmāl
Ḥalabjah
Paveh
Tozkhurmato
Qaṣr-e Shīrīn
Pol-e Zahāb
Kermānshāh
Eslāmābād
Khānaqīn
Jalūlā'
Al Manṣūrīyah
DIYĀLĀ
Al Khāliṣ
Ba'qūbah
Mandalī
Īlām
At Tāj
Al Ḥabbānīyah
Ar Ramādī
Al Fallūjah
BAGHDAD
Salmān Pāk
Zurbātīyah
Badrah
Mehrān
Al Iskandarīyah
Al Musayyib
BĀBIL
Buḥayrat ar Razāzah
Al Hindīyah
Karbalā'
Al Ḥillah
An Nu'mānīyah
Al Kūt
Al Ḥayy

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ORSAM
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES

Assoc. Prof. Serhat Erkmen
ORSAM Political Advisor
Ahi Evran University
International Relations Department
serhaterkmen@orsam.org.tr

The Tuzhurmatu Turkmens:
A SUCCESS STORY

Summary
Tuzhurmatu that constitutes a buffer zone between the Arabs and Kurds due to its location is a significant Turkmen settlement in terms of demographic and geographic qualities. Tuzhurmatu is one of the places in Iraq where the Iraqi Turkmen community gained success in the post-occupation period. Tuzhurmatu consolidated this success in the latest provincial council elections as well. Tuzhurmatu is a transition point between Kirkuk and the Turkmens of Diyala. It also provides support to Kirkuk with its political status and Turkmen entity. Therefore, it has been one of the most important districts for the Iraqi Turkmens throughout the years.

Tuzhurmatu which is the provincial district of Salahaddin, located on the north of Baghdad is the second largest district of the province. As usual in the region, the relations are based on earthbound production; therefore the mode of organization is merely tribal-structured. The population is increasing rapidly. Tuzhurmatu's population which was 128,000 in 2003 before the occupation, increased up to 190,000 nowadays. This figure shows that the population increased 50% during the six years after the occupation. The majority of the Turkmen population in Tuzhurmatu city center is of Shiite origin but the villagers are mostly Sunni. Though there isn't any sectarian discrimination, the Turkmens are living in peace and are willing to cooperate. Despite there were some provocations to evoke sectarian discrimination in some villages, such efforts were ignored by the locals. Majority of the Turkmens living in Tuzhurmatu are members of the Turkish Bayat branch. Tuzhurmatu's social structure had a significant influence on the political arena as well. Turkmen's who were alienated by the former regime, were prematurely politicized and participated in the Shiite movements within Iraq.

There are some facts about politics in the district: ITF who won two seats in Salahaddin in the 31 January 2009 elections, probably gained its greatest victory in Tuzhurmatu. The number of total voters in the district was 90,000 and the electoral turnout was 50 %. Still, ITF managed to get 20,000 votes. This shows that the majority of the Turkmens have voted for ITF. When we take a look at the overall figures in other regions, we see that, Tuzhurmatu was ITF's greatest success on proportional basis. In particular when considering facts such as the canons of provincial committee elections of 2005 and nonparticipation of Arabs, Tuzhurmatu is a success.

Introduction

ORSAM's field research in the Turkmen districts of Iraq continue. After the field study in Tal Afar from March 2009, another detailed study of Turkmens was conducted between May 30 and June 02 in the Tuzhurmatu district of the Salahaddin province. Areas with a dense Turkmen population have been visited, and tribal leaders, prominent figures, ITF representatives and locals of those districts and villages were interviewed as part of the field research. This particular study depicts the overall situation in Tuzhurmatu. After describing the overall situation, the study deals with the conditions and main issues of the Tuzhurmatu Turkmen community and introduces possible solutions.

The Strategic Significance of Tuzhurmatu

1. Due to its location, Tuzhurmatu constitutes a buffer zone between the Arabs and Kurds. For the Kurds, Tuzhurmatu is an outpost for controlling the main road to Tikrit, an important Sunni Arab center.

2. Tuzhurmatu was listed in the Kurdish Regional Government's (KRG) constitutional draft of 2002 as a region within the Kurdish expansion area. Therefore, in the UN's reports it is considered one of the "disputed areas" in Iraq. Tuzhurmatu remained within the Kurdish expansion area in the latest constitution draft released by the KRG.

3. Tuzhurmatu's strategic location makes it very suitable for a fourth Kurdish province, along with the three provinces currently under the KRG. The Kurds, who failed to annex Kirkuk, need new provinces to achieve and maintain political balance. There are two ways to create new provinces: change the administrative borders of existing provinces and to attach some of their districts to other provinces. (e.g., detaching some districts of northern Mosul and attaching them to Duhok and Arbil.) The other way is to detach several settlements in different provinces and piece them together into a new province. Tuzhurmatu is also important since it can be used to control the roads to Hanekin (as shown on Iraqi Kurdish maps). It is not a recent idea among Kurds to make a new province out of some settlements in the northern parts of Tuzhurmatu, Hanekin, Kifri and Diyala. Tuzhurmatu is a important potential Kurdish province for its geographic location and demographic qualities.

4. Tuzhurmatu is one of the places in Iraq where the Turkmen community is thriving. Their success increases the prestige of the region's Turkmens and the Turkmen movement.

5. Tuzhurmatu is a trade and contact point for the Turkmens of Diyala and Kirkuk. If Tuzhurmatu were to fail, the already weak ties between the Turkmens and Diyala would be seriousl;y damaged. Tuzhurmatu is a great support to Kirkuk for its political status and its Turkmen presence. There are also efforts to unite and Kirkuk. Tuzhurmatu was previously part of Kirkuk, and was attached to Salahaddin by Saddam Hussein. The district is important because of these efforts toward reunification.

6. The hills on the eastern part of the district centre contain oil deposits that were surveyed by the Iraqi Government during the reign of Saddam Hussein and sealed to be kept as reserves. Still there is no reliable information about the amount and quality of the reserves.

Administrative Structure

Tuzhurmatu is in the province of Salahaddin, north of Baghdad. The Salahaddin province consists of 8 districts which are: Beyci, Tikrit, Dor, Shirgat, Duceyl, Samarra and Tuzhurmatu. Tuzhurmatu is the second largest district of the province with its population of 1,200,000 people. (The largest district, Samarra, witnessed the bombing incident that triggered Sunni-Shiite conflict in 2005. The central district of Salahaddin is Tikrit with a population of 120,000.) Tuzhurmatu has three sub-districts (Amirli, Süleymanbey and Navculu) and several villages.

Social Structure

As usual in the region, social relations are based on agricultural production in Tuzhurmatu. Therefore the mode of organization is mainly tribal. The tribal structure in Tuzhurmatu is the same as the Arabic, Turkmen and Kurdish structures. Some families in the district center seem to be urbanized, but their bonds are still as strong as those to be found in the villages located close to the center. The population is increasing rapidly. Tuzhurmatu's population was 128,000 before the occupation, and has increased to 190,000. This figure shows that the population increased 50% during the six years since the occupation. The number of Turkmens living in the center, sub-districts and villages of Tuzhurmatu is approximately 75,000.

The religious structure of the districts is as follows: while the most of the Arabs and all the Kurds are Sunni, the majority of the Tuzhurmatu Turkmen population is Shiite. The majority of Turkmens living in the center are Shiite, whereas those living in the villages are largely Sunni. There is no sectarian discrimination. The Turkmens live in peace and cooperate. Despite some incidents designed to provoked sectarian discrimination in some villages, such efforts were ignored by the locals.

The majority of Tuzhurmatu Turkmens are members of the Turkish Bayat branch, and Tuzhurmatu is considered the Iraqi center of the Bayat branch. One of the qualities of Tuzhurmatu's demographic structure is rapid fluctuations in population. Although migration stands out as the main source of this rapid change, its consequences will not only affect the ethnic and sectarian dispersion of the district, but also the economy, with negative effects on Turkmen communities that earn their living from rental incomes and agriculture. Confiscations of Turkmen land still occur, especially in the district center. Such practices become more prevalent, and daily life becomes even more complicated for the Turkmens as the Kurdish influence in the police forces and in the army grows stronger.

Tuzhurmatu's social structure has a significant influence on the political arena as well. Turkmen's who were alienated by the former regime, were prematurely politicized and participated in the Shiite movements within Iraq.

The most striking fact revealed by this field study was the realization that some Turkmens, especially in the larger settlements, have been Arabized. Some of them still support the ITF in elections, but the rest don't see themselves as Turkmen. The most distinct example is Dombalandere Village. This village supported the ITF in the provincial elections but the majority of the locals define themselves as Arab. Similar attitudes are observed among tribes as well. Some branches of Turkmen tribes see themselves as Arab, although their leader and the majority of their tribe are Turkmens. This may cause problems for Turkmens during the upcoming census by causing their population to appear smaller than it actually is.

In Iraq, one of the most popular item on the agenda is the census. The same enthusiasm was also seen in Tuzhurmatu. The census was the main topic of conversation at most of the places we visited, and has unfortunately become a matter of negotiation in some areas. No matter what their ethnical origin is, all people in Iraq are expecting help and privileges for registering themselves as a member of specific ethnic group. The main reason for this is the peoples (who were disregarded for years and faced security issues after the occupation) will to defend themselves. Some believe that they are subject to oppression and are not able to enjoy their most basic rights only because they are Turkmen. This is not an entirely false argument. That's why, just like during the election process, the political process in Iraq is largely based on putting people on a salary, giving out jobs and supplying aids and services. This general attitude in Iraq is also prevalent in Tuzhurmatu. But such an attitude cannot be generalized to describe all groups and individuals. For example, despite all the difficulties they face, the Karanaz village of Tuzhurmatu is proud of

its Turkish roots, and its people stick to their historical roots by relating detailed stories about their ancestors' loyalty to the Ottomans.

Tuzhurmatu's Majority Turkmen Villages and Sub-districts and Their Social Structure
Tuzhurmatu Center: Tuzhurmatu center contains more than one-third of the district's total population. One of its sub-districts, Navculu, seems to remain only on paper now since its entire population has abandoned the village and moved to the city center. This sub-district consists largely of Kurdish villages, and those who moved to the city center are mainly Kurds. Mustafa Ağa, Aksu, Molla Sefer, Orta and Cakkala are the Turkmen quarters of Tuzhurmatu Centrum.

Yengice Village: This is one of the largest villages of Tuzhurmatu. The population is approximately 14,000. All the villagers speak Turkish but similar to other districts, Arabization can be seen here as well. Similar to Talafar and Diyala here, too, a significant number of Sunni Turkmen define themselves as Arab. There are about 20 significant tribes in Yengice but the most prominent one is the Ihtiyarli tribe. They constitute almost the half of the population. Most of the Yengice tribes are of Bayati origin. Harmanli and Hamdani are the names of the other two significant tribes. They live on agriculture. Some incidents of murder have occurred to provoke Sunni-Shiite discrimination in the village. 135 Shiite and 25 Sunni families have abandoned the village due to these incidents. The incidents were brought to an end by the efforts of the prominent figures of the village.

Yengice village strongly supports the ITF. Their main problems are security issues, unemployment and drought. This large village didn't have a police station until 1 year ago, and stability doesn't seem to be provided yet. Unemployment rates remain very high, and a large number of Turkmens are still waiting for jobs with the the state. There are two elementary schools, one secondary school and one village clinic in the village. Water is the main problem. There is only one water well in the entire village, and it is insufficient. New wells are needed.

Abbut Village: The Abbut Village of the Amirli sub-district has a population of between 1,800 and 2,000 people. 200 of them are Arab and the rest are Turkmen. Barley and wheat production and gardening are common in the village, which is 25 kilometers from the Tuzhurmatu Center. It is located in a remote area, and therefore was not subject to the impactsof the occupation. The people lead normal lives. There are no security issues in the village. Many villagers are educated. Students from surrounding villages come to Abbut for school. Political awareness is high. Although the village is quite far from the polling district, people walked 5 km to vote. Emigration to this village was encouraged after the occupation but its distant location and homogeneity made it hard for immigrants to settle.

Çardakli Village: The village's population is roughly 1,400. In the village where barley and wheat is produced, the irrigation is made by water provided from wells. Security situation is very well and there are two schools giving Turkish education. Altough there is one village clinic, no doctor is available. All Turkemens in the village see themselves as Turkmen and no one claims to be Arab.

Bastamli Village: This is one of the large villages where Turkish is spoken. The population is about 5,300. The village foundation established on 1955 helps to educate the children of the village. There are well educated people among the villagers. Peoples' expectations of basic services is increasing.

Hasadarli Village: The village's population is approximately 3,500, and Turkmens are the majority. There also Kurds. The name of the village is Kelevent Village in older documents. Prominent tribes include the Bayraktar, Kayali, Maasli, Kirmizili, Fethili, Subatli, Muhsinli and

Keleventli. There is neither a clinic nor a doctor in the village. Drought is a serious problem.

Köküz Village: Turkmens are the majority in this village where the population is less than 1000. Besides the Muratlilar, Vandeviler and Aliyeliler tribes there is one tribe called the Acemiler whose members define themselves as Arabs, but speak Turkish.

Amirli/Emirli Sub-District: The population is 16,000, consisting of Turkmens and a few Kurds and Arabs. Turkey is greatly appreciated by the locals for sending aid and medical care to the districts after the attack of 2007.

Biravcili Village: The population is 2,000. They all speak Turkish. The security condition is good, but there is no irrigation. The biggest tribe of the village is the Biravcili tribe, which has other branches in various villages.

Karnaz Village: This is a small village with 750 people. There is one school, which conducts its classes in Turkish. Consciousness of Turkish and Turkmen identity is very strong in this village. Villagers proudly display the old Ottoman documents and scripts of their ancestors. There is no clinic in the village. Although there are four water wells, water is still insufficient. Therefore, they even had to sell their livestock. There are no security issues in the village. The whole population is the member of one tribe, the Karanaz, which is said to have members in Kirkuk, Tavuk, Mosul, Fallujah, Kut, Baghdad, Hille, Tazehurmatu and Kifri, and a total of 7,000 members.

Tuzhurmatu's Economic Structure

Although most people in Tuzhurmatu earn their living from agriculture, civil service is seen as the most important occupation. Actually, such an idea is prevalent among all Turkmens. Most probably they chose to work in public service, and spread around Iraq in order to resist the former regime's oppression and to obtain a fixed income. So most of them were assimilated. They attach great importance to civil service, so much that even during the times of embargo when the civil servants' wages were reduced to two dollars per month, the Turkmens continued to work while others quit. Since the establishment of the new regime, civil servant wages have improved. Today, an average civil servant has an income of 500 dollars. Since they refused to quit their jobs, a great number of Turkmens are still hold public offices today.

Like other areas in Iraq, infrastructure is a great problem Tuzhurmatu. Large investments are needed to overcome this problem. The budget that varies in proportion to Iraq's oil income is declining. The money allocated for Tuzhurmatu is a part of Salahaddin's overall budget. The budget allocated to Salahaddin was 125 billion dinars in 2006, 177 billion dinars in 2007, 176 billion dinars in 2008, and 115 billion dinars in 2009. Tuzhurmatu received 8 billion dinars but the money has already been spent, corruptly. In Iraq, Salahaddin ranks second in corruption and irregularity and third in poverty, so they asked Baghdad to increase their budget. The district's economy is based on agriculture. Barley, wheat crops and orchards are common. Trade in the district is conducted and controlled by the Kurds. Properties used for trading purposes largely belong to Turkmens, and Turkmens lease their properties to Kurds. Turkmen properties have been being confiscated since the regime of Saddam Hussein. Arabs and Kurds have built properties on confiscated Turkmen lands. Commissions to investigate such properties have been established, but results have yet to be obtained.

Tuzhurmatu's Security Condition

For the most part, Tuzhurmatu is seen as a secure district, but especially between 2005 and 2007 a variety of kidnapping and violent incidents occurred. Although the streets are not very safe at night, the situation is said to have been improving over the last few months. The US base is distant from the city center, but close to the airport. Tuzhurmatu saw two or three incidents since the occupation. The biggest was

the bombing attack of 2007, which occurred in Amirli, but it will be no surprise if the recent violent attacks in Kirkuk have repercussions in Tuzhurmatu soon.

District security forces largely consist of the peshmerga and Kurdish forces called the "asayish". Police forces include Kurds, Arabs and Turkmens. There is a recent increase in the number of Turkmen policemen. Still, the most significant armed forces in the district are the peshmerga. The presence of the Iraqi army in the district has improved the situation, but the Kurds have still power, and they don't seem to back off.

Tuzhurmatu's Political Climate

In Tuzhurmatu, Turkmens are highly politicized. Besides those in the ITF, there are many successful independent Iraqi politicians in Tuzhurmatu. Currently, one minister (Youth and Sports Minister Jasim Mohammed), four MP's (Fevzi Ekrem, Muhammet Mehdi and Abbas Beyatlı, Jasim Mohammed), two undersecretaries, at least ten managing directors and many other high rank ing bureaucrats are from Tuzhurmatu. Tuzhurmatu is deeply involved in politics because many Shiite Turkmen fled from Iraq during the reign of Saddam Hussein and migrated to Iran. There they started to become active in the politics of Islamist parties. After the war they returned to Iraq, and, along with the rise of the Shiites in Iraq, they also became influential in politics.

Still, it would not be correct to claim that Tuzhurmatu is significant only to Islamist Shiite Turkmens. Tuzhurmatu's location and ethnic composition laid the ground for early politicization as follows: 1. Tuzhurmatu Turkmens were early to politicize. 2. They improved their organization skills. 3. They struggled. During the Baath regime, Shiism was marginalized and identified with Iran. Such an attitude had two major consequences. First, nationalism spread among intellectual Shiite Turkmens. Some Shiite Turkmen became pro-Turkish, even Turkist. They protected their Turkish identities and kept their Turkish values alive. Second, some Shiite Turkmens joined Islamic movements opposed to the regime. Many Turkmen joined organizations like the Dawa Party and SCIRI, and therefore had to remain in exile for many years. After the collapse of the Saddam Hussein's regime, they returned to Iraq and took on important roles in these movements. Here is one more fact: since Tuzhurmatu is close to the Kurdish and pro-Iranian Shiite movements, Saddam Hussein thought Tuzhurmatu was very important. That's why the Sunni and Shiite Turkmens in this district were especially encouraged to join the Baath Party. The Shiite and Sunni Turkmens who were integrated into the system in those years still see themselves as Arab.

There have been two significant political events in Tuzhurmatu since 1991. First, there was the 1991 riot in which Turkmens and Kurds organized together and ousted the Baathists. As a result of this collective riot, Baghdad lost control over the district for some time. After the return of the Iraqi Army, control was shortly regained. This short alliance between Turkmens and Kurds spread seeds of distrust as well because Turkmens believe that the Kurds knew that the Iraqi Army would come and retreated the night before without warning the Turkmens. They think they were betrayed by the Kurds. The second important incident was the intense Arabization practices implemented soon after Saddam Hussein regained control over the district. Turkmen lands were forcefully confiscated and given to Arabs. Saddam Hussein's Arabization policy for Tuzhurmatu used oppression, intimidation and rewards.

The election results give significant clues about local politics in Tuzhurmatu. First, SCIRI which dominated the district in the 2005 elections, lost power. On the other hand, the Dawa Power started to rise among Shiites as elections results also show. The main reason is that Iraq Islamic Turkmen Union president, Abbas Beyatli, who supported the Dawa Party, was from Tuzhurmatu. Beyatli's power was limited, but

Maliki's recovered strength in Iraq increased his power.

The Tuzhurmatu elections were interesting for the Kurds. Rather than well known candidates from KDP and PUK, they preferred unknown candidates in Tuzhurmatu. At the top of the Kurdish list was a person from Tuzhurmatu known by the name of Emin. Rather than the traditional KDP-PUK approach, they preferred to have a pro-Islamist win the day. Although the two parties have gained strength during the last few years in Tuzhurmatu, they are not much favored by the local Kurds. The Davuda, a powerful tribe in the district, has fought with Baghdad against the KDP in the past. The Zergene, the second largest tribe, doesn't favor KDP either. But the KDP and PUK's rising power in the North had an influence on Tuzhurmatu as well.

Here are two facts about politics in the district: ITF won two seats in Salahaddin in the January 31, 2009 elections, probably gaining its greatest victory in Tuzhurmatu. The number of total voters in the district was 90,000, and the electoral turnout was 50%. Still, ITF managed to get 20,000 votes. This shows that the majority of Turkmens voted for ITF. When we look at the overall figures in other regions, we see that Tuzhurmatu was ITF's greatest success on proportional basis. Some criticize ITF for winning only two seats since previously 7 seats were given to Turkmens, but considering facts such as the rules of the provincial council elections of 2005 and Arab non-participation, Tuzhurmatu should be seen as a success. Besides, the previously mentioned prominent Shiite Turkmen politicians supported their own parties against the ITF and split the Turkmen vote. As a consequence of ITF's success in Tuzhurmatu, ITF authorities gained flexibility in physical and political terms. As we know, it is not easy to move from one point in Iraq to another one. Even when traveling within a province or district one can be subject to attacks or the abuse of security personell. But, the ITF can now enjoy the privileges of Iraqi government officials since it has two seats on the Salahaddin provincial council. The ITF also gained flexibility in the political arena. ITF's flexibility in Tuzhurmatu can be judged as follows: 1. As a result of its success in the local elections, the ITF is being invited to form an electoral alliance in Salahaddin and has a chance of being able to send one MP to the parliament. Mathematically, it isn't likely that the ITF will all Turkmens in Salahhaddin and send an PM to the parliament. The renewed participation of Sunnis in the electoral process reduces the Turkmen community to a small minority in Salahaddin and makes this virtually impossible. However, because of the the variety of other parties, every single vote is valuable. Therefore, groups sharing the same political agenda on issues such as Kirkuk and territorial unity are willing to cooperate with the ITF to increase their votes. It can be claimed that the local elections gave the ITF in Tuzhurmatu more flexibility. 2. Flexibility will help the ITF to gather strength. The ITF in Tuzhurmatu is at a turning point now and has started to make efficient use of its advantage. 3. The third advantage of gaining flexibility is that it restricts the maneuverability of the Kurds. The Kurdish movement weakened as a result of the strengthened central Iraqi government, but it has not ended. As the central authority grows stronger, there is the possibility of opening an investigation against the district governor and other administrative authorities, in case of irregularities. This will help to reduce the irregular practices of the Kurdish groups. From this point of view, the ITF has managed to turn its electoral success into political capital. From the political point of view, this success may be influential among those who expect advantages from politics and some may lean toward the ITF.

Suggestions for Tuzhurmatu

1. The public service-politics relation seen in other districts also obtains Tuzhurmatu. Therefore, building water wells, schools, play grounds and parks, village clinics and social facilities, keeping promises and providing continuous service (not only when a census or an

elections is held) would be wise. A special focus on regions where people define themselves as Arabs, although they speak Turkmen, would lead them to register themselves as Turkmen and not Arab. Some of the Turkmens are not completely Arabized, and some claim to be Arab to obtain protection and benefits. The coming census is very important, and even convincing one single person is crucial. Therefore steps must be taken immediately.

2. When we consider Tuzhurmatu's strategic significance and the policies actively pursued in the districts, it is crucial to increase resources. Successful policies enabled the district to access state resources, and Turkmens have begun to benefit from this, but still, local politics need to be activated, and women's and junior branches need financial support. Young people must be encouraged to play sports. Tuzhurmatu is a place where women are politically active. If such participation is encouraged and carried to a further level, both the ITF's votes and political consciousness among Turkmens will increase. Turkmen women need to be integrated into the political arena at a certain level. But above all, such activities need to be carried out in the countryside, too. Women in the cities are already active. They have educational opportunities and may be themselves, but in the country side, social awareness can only be raised through women's activities. That's why the budget needs allocations for these activities.

3. The election is one of the most important items on Iraq's agenda. It has been observed that electoral efforts have already started in Tuzhurmatu, but the sustainability of these efforts depend on financial conditions. Therefore, special budget funds needs to be allocated before the census, and this budget must be used for census expenses only.

4. The promises made to Tuzhurmatu need to be kept. This is important to restore trust among the people.

5. Bad education, which is prevalent in Iraq, is to be found in Tuzhurmatu, too. Most of the school buildings are in terrible condition. The restoration of the buildings and construction of additional ones will increase sympathy for Turkey. Additionally, there is great demand in Tuzhurmatu for medical treatment in Turkey.

6. Making a documentary on Iraqi Turkmen and airing it both in Iraq and Turkey before the census would provide great psychological support for Turkmens. A documentary that deals with the traditions of the Turkmen community and contains scenes of people and their daily life and reaches even the smallest villages could be prepared in a short time and would illustrate the oppression and pain of the Turkmens, their thoughts about the current situation in Iraq and their expectations from Turkey in a very effective way.

7. The district must prepare for attacks, aiming to scare and intimidate Tuzhurmatu Turkmens, especially before the election, as occurred in Kirkuk.

8. The ITF's election results in Tuzhurmatu demonstrate the imporance of representation in the government for Turkmens, no matter what scale. Therefore, it would be useful to cooperate with the powerful political groups in Salahaddin during the elections process so as to enable the Turkmens to send one PM to the parliament, because even if all the Turkmens of Tuzhurmatu were united under the ITF umbrella and voted for them, it would not be sufficient to send a representative to the parliament, since there are no Turkmens in the province's other districts.

Mithatpaşa Caddesi 46/4 Kızılay-Ankara TURKEY
Tel: +90 (312) 430 26 09 Fax: +90 (312) 430 39 48
www.orsam.org.tr, orsam@orsam.org.tr