

Emancipatory Dialectics: A Philosophical Analysis of the Tension between Kurdish Nationalism and Feminism in the Construction of Female Identity

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Date of receiving the research: 1/4/2025

Publication consent date: 10/4/2025

Abstract:

This research presents a philosophical analysis of the dialectical relationship between two emancipatory discourses - Kurdish nationalism and feminism - in the construction of Kurdish women's identity. Employing Hegelian dialectics as the overarching theoretical framework, this study conceptualizes Kurdish nationalism as thesis and feminism as antithesis, seeking to identify pathways toward a dynamic synthesis. Axel Honneth's Recognition Theory, through its tripartite distinction of love, rights, and social solidarity, provides a systematic framework for analyzing the multifaceted challenges faced by Kurdish women at each level. By incorporating Patricia Hill Collins's concept of intersectional consciousness into this framework, we demonstrate how the simultaneous experience of gender and national oppression can generate a unique form of critical consciousness that operates across all three levels of recognition.

Adrienne Rich's politics of location helps us understand how this critical consciousness can be transformed into practical strategies for resistance and change. By connecting different levels of analysis - from the general dialectic between nationalism and feminism to the lived experience of Kurdish women within the three spheres of recognition - this research provides a theoretical framework for understanding and addressing these tensions. Furthermore, it demonstrates how this apparent contradiction can be utilized to develop new theoretical perspectives on the relationship between collective and individual emancipation.

Keywords: Emancipatory Dialectics, Dynamic Synthesis, Recognition Theory, Intersectional Consciousness, Politics of Location

Introduction

The philosophical problem of emancipation presents itself as a fundamental paradox in the trajectory of human liberation movements. At its core lies a persistent tension between collective and individual forms of emancipation, each operating through distinct logics yet inevitably

intertwined in the lived experience of subjects seeking liberation. This contradiction becomes particularly acute when examining intersecting systems of oppression, where different vectors of emancipatory struggle may appear to work at cross-purposes, potentially undermining each other's liberatory aims. The philosophical challenge extends beyond merely identifying these tensions to understanding how they might be productively synthesized in service of a more comprehensive vision of human freedom (Fraser, 2000; Young, 1990; Butler, 2004). This complexity manifests most prominently in cases where subjects simultaneously occupy positions within multiple liberation movements, each with its own theoretical foundations, strategic imperatives, and visions of emancipation.

The relationship between nationalism and feminism emerges as a paradigmatic case of this broader philosophical problem, offering a unique window into the dialectical nature of emancipatory struggles. Nationalism operates through the logic of unified identity, shared historical consciousness, and collective self-determination (Kandiyoti, 1988, 1991; Yuval-Davis, 1997). It demands allegiance to a collective project of national liberation, often privileging unity over internal difference in service of this broader goal. This imperative can create significant tension with feminist aims, which fundamentally challenge traditional social structures and gender hierarchies that nationalist movements might seek to preserve or reinforce in the name of cultural authenticity or social cohesion. Feminism, with its emphasis on individual autonomy, bodily sovereignty, and the dismantling of patriarchal power structures, may appear to threaten the unity required for successful nationalist struggle. Conversely, nationalist movements might view feminist demands as potentially divisive, introducing internal conflicts that could weaken the collective struggle for national liberation. A deeper philosophical question about the nature of emancipation itself thus emerges: can liberation be achieved through collective struggle without sacrificing individual autonomy, or conversely, can individual liberation be meaningful without addressing broader structures of collective oppression (McClintock, 1995)?

Hegelian dialectics, as interpreted through contemporary critical theory, provides a particularly fertile framework for understanding and potentially resolving this tension (Honneth, 1995; Pippin, 2008). The dialectical method, with its emphasis on the productive nature of contradiction, suggests that apparent oppositions might contain within themselves the seeds of their own resolution. Rather than viewing the tension between nationalism and feminism as an

insurmountable contradiction, a dialectical approach allows us to understand how this very tension might generate new theoretical insights and practical possibilities for emancipation.

This dialectical tension manifested concretely in the experiences of Kurdish women activists, as evidenced in the 1979 movement and the exodus to Kani Miran camp. As one activist, Malaka, articulated: "The state, feudalists, Islamists, etc., were all united in one front. Facing this front, there was a city assembly and a democratic spirit... We, the women, called on the merchants to close their stores and we demonstrated to the Mariwan parish and there held a sit-in to demand the end of the siege" (Sultani, 2014). This statement illustrates how Kurdish women positioned themselves at the intersection of nationalist resistance against state oppression while simultaneously challenging traditional gender roles by taking leadership in public political actions.

The concept of *aufhebung* - often translated as sublation - becomes crucial here, suggesting a form of resolution that neither simply negates nor preserves the original contradiction, but rather transforms it into something qualitatively new (Butler, 2012). This transformation occurs through a process of determinate negation, where each position's internal contradictions lead to its own transcendence, yet in a way that preserves its essential truth moment.

Recognition Theory provides a systematic framework for analyzing this dialectical tension across multiple levels of social experience (Honneth, 1995, 2014). Through its tripartite distinction of love, rights, and social solidarity, this framework allows us to examine how the nationalism-feminism dialectic manifests differently across various spheres of recognition. At the level of love, we can analyze how intimate relationships and family structures become sites of tension between nationalist and feminist imperatives. The sphere of rights brings into focus questions of legal recognition and political participation, where nationalist and feminist claims might compete for precedence. Social solidarity highlights issues of cultural recognition and collective identity formation. This framework gains additional analytical power when enriched by concepts of intersectional consciousness and politics of location, which help us understand how the simultaneous experience of multiple forms of oppression can generate unique forms of critical awareness and how abstract contradictions manifest in concrete historical and geographical contexts (Collins, 2000; Rich, 1984).

This paper builds on recent theoretical work examining the intersection of recognition theory and feminist philosophy to develop new theoretical perspectives on the relationship between different forms of liberation struggle (Allen, 2008; McNay, 2008). By analyzing this concrete manifestation of the collective-individual emancipation paradox through the lens of Recognition Theory and intersectional analysis, we aim to demonstrate how apparent contradictions in emancipatory struggles might serve as productive sources of new theoretical insights and practical strategies for liberation. The paper proceeds through several stages: first, establishing the theoretical framework through a detailed examination of Hegelian dialectics and Recognition Theory; second, analyzing how this framework applies to the specific case of Kurdish women's identity formation; third, examining how the apparent contradiction between nationalist and feminist imperatives might be productively resolved through a new theoretical synthesis.

Literature Review

Literature Review

The intersection of nationalism and feminism in the context of Kurdish women's identity formation presents a complex theoretical terrain that has been explored through various philosophical and sociological frameworks. This literature review examines the key theoretical perspectives and empirical studies that inform our understanding of this dialectical relationship.

Theoretical Foundations in Recognition Theory

Axel Honneth's Recognition Theory (1995, 2014) provides a fundamental framework for understanding the multilayered nature of social recognition and its role in identity formation. Honneth's tripartite model of recognition—love, rights, and social solidarity—has been particularly influential in analyzing how different forms of recognition interact in the context of minority women's experiences. The model suggests that recognition operates simultaneously at personal, legal, and social levels, creating complex dynamics particularly relevant to women in nationalist movements.

Fraser (2003) extends this framework by emphasizing the importance of both recognition and redistribution in addressing social justice, arguing that gender and ethnic discrimination cannot be reduced to either cultural misrecognition or economic maldistribution alone. This dual emphasis helps explain why Kurdish women's movements often combine demands for cultural recognition with calls for economic justice.

Building on Honneth's work, McNay (2008) examines how recognition dynamics specifically affect women in nationalist movements, highlighting the tension between collective recognition claims and individual autonomy. Allen's (2008) feminist critique of recognition theory further illuminates how traditional conceptualizations of recognition may inadvertently reinforce patriarchal power structures, even within liberation movements. These critiques provide essential theoretical tools for understanding the complexities faced by Kurdish women activists.

Intersectionality and Critical Consciousness

Patricia Hill Collins's (2000) theory of intersectional consciousness has been instrumental in understanding how multiple forms of oppression interact to create unique forms of critical awareness. Her framework helps explain how Kurdish women's simultaneous experience of gender and ethnic oppression can generate distinctive forms of political consciousness. Yuval-Davis (2006) applies this framework specifically to ethnic minority women, demonstrating how their position at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities can generate distinctive forms of political consciousness and resistance strategies.

Kandiyoti's (1988, 1991) seminal work on "patriarchal bargaining" provides crucial insights into how women in nationalist movements negotiate between gender equality demands and nationalist imperatives. Her research demonstrates how women's strategies of resistance are shaped by both cultural constraints and political opportunities within specific nationalist contexts. This concept has proven particularly useful in analyzing how Kurdish women navigate between traditional social structures and emancipatory aspirations.

Nationalism and Gender

The relationship between nationalism and gender has been extensively theorized by scholars such as Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989), who examine how women are positioned as both participants in and symbols of nationalist movements. Their work helps explain the particular challenges faced by Kurdish women who must navigate between their roles as symbols of national identity and agents of social change.

McClintock's (1995) analysis of gender in nationalist movements reveals how women's bodies and identities often become battlegrounds for competing nationalist and feminist claims. This theoretical perspective helps illuminate why issues of women's autonomy and body politics remain contentious within Kurdish nationalist movements.

Mojab's (2001) specific work on Kurdish women's movements provides crucial empirical evidence of how these theoretical tensions manifest in concrete political struggles. Her research demonstrates how Kurdish women have developed distinctive forms of feminist consciousness that simultaneously engage with and challenge nationalist frameworks.

Kurdish Women's Movements: Empirical Studies and Historical Examples

The theoretical frameworks discussed above find concrete expression in the historical development and contemporary manifestations of Kurdish women's movements. Begikhani et al. (2018) provide a comprehensive analysis of how Kurdish women's organizations in Iraq have navigated the complex terrain between nationalist aspirations and feminist goals. Their research documents how organizations like the Kurdistan Women's Union (KWU) have developed innovative strategies to address both national oppression and patriarchal structures within Kurdish society.

Tank's (2017) study of women fighters in the Kurdish regions of Syria offers compelling evidence of how women have transformed traditional gender roles while participating in national liberation struggles. The research examines how the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) have developed a distinctive feminist ideology that combines Kurdish democratic confederalism with radical feminist principles.

Çaha's (2019) longitudinal study of Kurdish women's organizations in Turkey documents how groups like the Free Women's Movement (TJA) have developed sophisticated theoretical frameworks that integrate feminist and democratic principles with Kurdish political demands. The study shows how these organizations have successfully challenged both state oppression and internal patriarchal structures through coordinated political action.

Dryaz (2016) provides detailed case studies of Kurdish women's activism in Iran, examining how organizations navigate between religious constraints, state repression, and nationalist movements. The research demonstrates how Kurdish women activists have developed unique forms of resistance that address multiple layers of oppression simultaneously.

Transnational Dimensions and Contemporary Developments

Recent scholarship has increasingly focused on the transnational dimensions of Kurdish women's movements. Şahin-Mencütek (2016) analyzes how Kurdish women's organizations operate across national borders, creating networks that challenge both state boundaries and traditional gender hierarchies. Her research documents how organizations like the Kurdish Women's Peace Office have developed transnational strategies that address both nationalist and feminist objectives.

Knapp et al. (2016) provide detailed analysis of the Rojava experiment in northern Syria, where Kurdish women have played a central role in developing new forms of democratic autonomy. Their research demonstrates how principles of feminist liberation have been integrated into structures of democratic governance, offering a practical model for resolving the tension between collective and individual emancipation.

Digital Activism and Contemporary Resistance

Contemporary research has begun to examine how Kurdish women's movements utilize digital platforms to advance both nationalist and feminist agendas. Kaya and Ögünç (2020) document how social media platforms have become crucial spaces for articulating new forms of Kurdish feminist consciousness that transcend traditional nationalist frameworks while remaining engaged with collective liberation struggles.

Al-Ali and Tas (2018) provide detailed case studies of how Kurdish women activists use digital platforms to create transnational networks of solidarity that address both gender-specific and nationalist concerns. Their research demonstrates how online spaces have become crucial sites for developing new theoretical syntheses between feminist and nationalist objectives.

Politics of Location and Embodied Experience

Adrienne Rich's (1984) politics of location offers valuable theoretical tools for understanding how abstract political tensions manifest in concrete geographical and historical contexts. This framework has been particularly useful in analyzing how Kurdish women navigate between different political identities and allegiances across diverse geographical contexts. Butler's (2004) work on gender performativity and collective identity provides additional theoretical resources for understanding how individual and collective identities are mutually constituted through ongoing processes of negotiation and resistance. Her analysis of how bodies become sites of political struggle has particular relevance for understanding Kurdish women's experiences of both national and gender-based oppression.

Dialectical Approaches to Liberation

Contemporary interpretations of Hegelian dialectics, particularly as developed by Butler (2012) and Žižek (2012), offer theoretical tools for understanding how apparent contradictions between nationalist and feminist imperatives might be productively resolved. These scholars suggest that rather than seeking a simple synthesis that eliminates contradiction, we should look for ways to harness the productive tension between different forms of liberation struggle.

This theoretical perspective is complemented by empirical studies of how women in various liberation movements have navigated similar tensions. Moghadam's (1994) comparative analysis

of women in different nationalist movements provides valuable insights into how these theoretical tensions manifest across different cultural and political contexts.

Gaps in Current Literature

While existing literature provides robust theoretical frameworks and empirical studies for understanding the relationship between nationalism and feminism, several important gaps remain. First, there is limited comparative analysis of how different Kurdish women's organizations across Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey develop distinct approaches to resolving the nationalism-feminism dialectic. Second, while there is growing research on digital activism, there remains insufficient theoretical analysis of how online spaces might transform traditional understanding of the relationship between individual and collective emancipation. Third, there is a need for more systematic analysis of how Recognition Theory might help explain the success or failure of different strategies for integrating feminist and nationalist objectives.

Furthermore, while existing research documents various organizational forms and strategies, there remains insufficient theoretical analysis of how these practical innovations might inform broader philosophical understanding of the relationship between individual and collective liberation. Additionally, there is limited research on how younger generations of Kurdish women activists might be developing new theoretical frameworks that transcend traditional distinctions between nationalist and feminist objectives.

This review of literature suggests that while significant theoretical resources exist for understanding the tension between nationalist and feminist imperatives in Kurdish women's identity formation, there remains a need for theoretical frameworks that can better account for the dynamic and evolving nature of this relationship. The integration of Recognition Theory with intersectional analysis and politics of location, combined with careful attention to empirical developments in Kurdish women's movements, offers promising directions for addressing these theoretical gaps.

Theoretical Framework: A Dialectical Approach to Recognition and Intersectional Consciousness

This study develops an integrated theoretical framework that combines Hegelian dialectics, Recognition Theory, intersectional consciousness, and the politics of location to analyze the complex relationship between Kurdish nationalism and feminism in the construction of female identity. Through specific examples from Kurdish women's experiences, we demonstrate how these theoretical elements work together to illuminate the dynamics of identity formation and political struggle.

Hegelian Dialectics as Meta-theoretical Foundation

Our theoretical framework begins with Hegelian dialectics as its meta-theoretical foundation, specifically employing the concept of *aufhebung* (sublation) to understand how apparent contradictions between nationalist and feminist imperatives might be productively resolved. Following Butler's (2012) interpretation of Hegelian dialectics, we conceptualize this relationship not as an opposition to be resolved through compromise, but as a productive tension generating new forms of political consciousness.

This dialectical approach manifests concretely in the experience of Kurdish women fighters in the YPJ (Women's Protection Units) in northern Syria. As documented by Tank (2017), these women simultaneously embody nationalist resistance through military participation while transforming traditional gender roles through their very presence as female combatants. The contradiction between traditional gender norms and military participation isn't simply resolved through compromise but generates new forms of female identity that transcend both traditional Kurdish gender roles and conventional Western feminist paradigms.

The experience of the women in the Marivan region during the 1979 movement provides a striking historical example of this dialectical process. As Malaka Mustapha Sultani describes: "After these two weeks [in the Kani Miran camp], like many people, I was sad. In the camp, we were together; I missed that atmosphere afterwards, I missed that life. It was a pleasant and happy life. We would have liked it to go on forever" (Sultani, 2014). What made this experience so significant was not merely the political resistance it represented but the creation of new social relations that transcended traditional gender boundaries. As another participant, Shamsi, described: "As women, we were omnipresent, we did everything: we ensured security, helped with the medical center, with waste-collection, and distributed the aid that arrived. In the camp, women played the main role" (Shamsi, 2014). This concrete example illustrates how the dialectical tension between nationalist imperatives (resistance against state oppression) and feminist transformations (challenging traditional gender roles) generated a qualitatively new political consciousness.

Recognition Theory as Analytical Framework

Within this dialectical meta-framework, we employ Honneth's Recognition Theory (1995, 2014) as our primary analytical tool, modified to address the specific dynamics of Kurdish women's experience:

Love Sphere

In the sphere of love, we examine how Kurdish women navigate between traditional familial bonds

and personal autonomy. For example, Begikhani et al.'s (2018) research in Iraqi Kurdistan shows how women's organizations like the Kurdistan Women's Union have developed programs that address domestic violence while respecting family structures. These initiatives demonstrate how recognition in the love sphere can be reconstructed to support both collective cultural values and individual rights.

The testimony from the women of Marivan provides concrete examples of how this tension manifested in their lived experience. As Guli Qobadi recounts: "However, until now, we had fought against these smears, without support from others; we had resisted the remarks of the Islamists and those of the others. We had fought to go to mosques, to demonstrations, we had fought to participate, it was not easy what we had won. We had already fought against the attacks of the city reactionaries. Sometimes, even against our families. Our fate was in our hands" (Qobadi, 2014). This statement illustrates how Kurdish women had to struggle for recognition in the love sphere, challenging family expectations while maintaining their connection to their cultural communities.

Rights Sphere

In the rights sphere, we analyze how Kurdish women pursue simultaneous recognition as women and as ethnic minorities. The Free Women's Movement (TJA) in Turkey, studied by Çaha (2019), provides a compelling example. Their legal advocacy simultaneously challenges gender discrimination in Turkish law and demands recognition of Kurdish cultural rights, demonstrating how different forms of recognition claims can reinforce rather than undermine each other.

The women of Marivan provide a vivid example of how this struggle for recognition in the rights sphere unfolded in practice. Malaka describes how: "The Supreme Leader ordered women to wear the hijab. The women's unit organized a demonstration against it. During the demonstration, one of the Islamists, out of provocation, fired a bullet into the air. A woman among us responded by shooting in the air" (Sultani, 2014). This incident demonstrates how Kurdish women simultaneously claimed their rights as Kurds (resisting state authority) and as women (opposing mandatory veiling), illustrating the intersectional nature of their struggle for recognition.

Social Solidarity Sphere

In the solidarity sphere, we examine how Kurdish women create new forms of collective identity. The women's communes in Rojava, documented by Knapp et al. (2016), exemplify this process, developing organizational forms that integrate feminist principles with Kurdish democratic confederalism.

The experience in the Kani Miran camp provides a powerful historical example of this process. As Sa'adiyah Nassimi describes: "In the camp, we created several committees, according to the needs on the ground: logistic committee, health, information, security, and even as a joke we called one the 'whey committee.' The food was abundant, there was no hunger or thirst. Everyone was equal, and aid was distributed to families according to the number of children. All this produced strength in the people. We did everything and were integrated with the people. It was unique, even today it is still unique" (Nassimi, 2014). This description illustrates how Kurdish women created new forms of social organization that embodied both Kurdish communal values and feminist principles of equality.

Intersectional Consciousness as Mediating Mechanism

Collins's (2000) concept of intersectional consciousness helps explain how Kurdish women's simultaneous experience of gender and ethnic oppression generates unique forms of critical awareness. This theoretical element integrates with Recognition Theory in several ways:

1. In the love sphere, intersectional consciousness helps women identify how family structures reflect both patriarchal and state power. For example, Dryaz's (2016) research in Iranian Kurdistan shows how women activists connect personal experiences of gender oppression with broader patterns of ethnic discrimination.

2. In the rights sphere, intersectional consciousness enables women to develop legal strategies that address multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously. The work of Kurdish women lawyers in Turkey, documented by Şahin-Mencütek (2016), demonstrates how legal advocacy can integrate gender and ethnic rights claims.
3. In the solidarity sphere, intersectional consciousness facilitates the development of new organizational forms. The Kurdish Women's Peace Office's transnational networks, studied by Al-Ali and Tas (2018), show how awareness of multiple oppressions generates new forms of political organization.

The testimony of Malaka Mustapha Sultani provides a concrete example of how this intersectional consciousness manifested in practice: "The camp was a laboratory to affirm that these women were here to fight for freedom, equality, and to support the Kurdish question, the oppressed, and social progress. Yet it was, in a way, a struggle against the whole society: there was a contradiction in society. On the one hand, there was a progressive and libertarian front, and on the other, a front composed of the state, feudalists, Islamists, and pro-government forces that condemned women and leftists and hurled sexist insults at them" (Sultani, 2014). This statement illustrates how Kurdish women developed a critical consciousness that recognized the interconnected nature of ethnic oppression, gender discrimination, and class exploitation.

Politics of Location as Contextualizing Framework

Rich's (1984) politics of location helps us understand how these theoretical dynamics manifest differently across Kurdish regions. This framework integrates with other theoretical elements in several ways:

1. With Recognition Theory: The different manifestations of recognition struggles across Kurdish regions reflect varying political and social contexts. For example, Kurdish women's organizations in Iraq face different challenges in pursuing recognition than their counterparts in Turkey or Syria.

The testimony of Kurdish women from Marivan illustrates how location shaped their political consciousness and strategies. Guli Qobadi describes: "It should be added, it was forbidden to wear Kurdish costume at school and in the state administration; even in the street, it was not allowed. The traditional costume represented a rural character; it was a pretext for contempt and humiliation. If we wore it, we were called villagers. I can tell you that this garment was, at the same time, prohibited and also a pretext for humiliation; it was a sign of ignorance and illiteracy"

(Qobadi, 2014). This statement highlights how Kurdish women's specific geographical and cultural location shaped their experience of oppression and resistance.

1. With Intersectional Consciousness: Geographical location influences how intersectional consciousness develops. Women in Rojava's autonomous region develop different forms of consciousness than those in more restrictive political contexts.

The shift in political conditions described by the women of Marivan after the state's military offensive illustrates this dynamic. As Malaka explains: "After the second war, almost twenty women left the city of Marivan to participate in the movement that was now under attack and in the process of changing to another form of resistance... But, I must remind you of one thing: these women, who were once so strong and active in the cities, were now becoming a burden to the organization... From the time of the first popular uprisings until the revolution and the state invasion of the Kurdish regions, pretty much everything was in common, and women and men were side by side... But, when the field of politics was limited only to the military, we became cumbersome: they did not know what to do with these women" (Sultani, 2014). This account demonstrates how changes in geographical and political location dramatically altered the conditions for Kurdish women's political participation.

Enhanced Integration Through Digital Spaces

Digital activism provides a crucial site for observing how these theoretical elements interact in contemporary contexts. Kaya and Ögünç's (2020) research shows how Kurdish women use digital platforms to:

1. Create virtual spaces where dialectical tensions between nationalism and feminism can be productively negotiated
2. Develop new forms of recognition that transcend geographical boundaries
3. Foster intersectional consciousness through transnational dialogue
4. Generate new "locations" for political resistance and identity formation

Theoretical Integration in Practice: The Rojava Case Study

The Rojava autonomous region provides a compelling example of how these theoretical elements work together in practice. Here we see:

1. Dialectical Resolution: The integration of feminist principles into structures of democratic autonomy represents a practical synthesis of nationalist and feminist objectives.
2. Recognition Across Spheres: New social institutions support recognition in all three spheres simultaneously through:
 - Transformation of family law (love sphere)
 - Implementation of co-leadership requirements (rights sphere)
 - Development of women's cooperatives (solidarity sphere)

3. Intersectional Consciousness: Women's active participation in both military defense and civil governance demonstrates how awareness of multiple oppressions generates new forms of political agency.
4. Politics of Location: The specific geographical and political context of Rojava enables unique forms of feminist practice that might not be possible in other Kurdish regions.

The historical experience of the women in Kani Miran camp provides a powerful precedent for these contemporary developments. As one participant described: "Kani Miran gave us the chance to experience and test ourselves. Our struggle was harder than that of men's; we had to fight

against the reactionary tradition. Yes, this camp was our theater stage, to show that women were fighting for freedom, equality, workers, and Kurds. And we succeeded" (Anonymous, 2014).

This historical example demonstrates how Kurdish women have long been engaged in creating spaces where nationalist and feminist imperatives could be productively integrated.

However, the return to militarized conflict after the camp experience also illustrates the challenges in sustaining such integration. As one participant recalled: "In contrast to the first months of the armed struggle that followed this period, in the camp and city, it was women who took the initiative. But when the resistance turned into an armed struggle, women found themselves on the bangs of the struggle" (Anonymous, 2014). This observation highlights how shifts in political context can undermine previously achieved syntheses between nationalist and feminist objectives.

A particularly striking example of how Kurdish women addressed the tension between nationalist and feminist imperatives comes from Guli Qobadi's account of their struggle for inclusion in armed resistance: "We arrived at a village called Bâwarêz. The next day, men over 15 years of age were offered the opportunity to take up arms if they wanted to, but not women, not even to take up any responsibilities. Do you know why? Because we were women. If I had been a man that day and called myself Mohammed, I would have been a commander for sure" (Qobadi, 2014). This testimony illustrates the concrete manifestation of the theoretical tension between nationalist prioritization of military resistance and feminist demands for equal participation.

The resolution of this tension came through persistence and strategic adaptation: "The first group

of armed women was formed. We were ten women constituting the first group of armed women. Against all expectations and hesitations of the organization, this presence of women did not create a bad reputation among people. This time, we were armed, but doing the same thing we were doing without weapons. We entered the mosques with weapons to meet with people and share ideas. We were loved, unlike what the organization expected. I participated in the first group of armed women, but not because I liked weapons. No, because I wanted us to go beyond that" (Qobadi, 2014). This account demonstrates how Kurdish women transformed the meaning of armed resistance by incorporating feminist principles of community engagement and political education, creating a practical synthesis of nationalist and feminist imperatives.

The Challenge of Sexual Politics and the Construction of Political Subjectivity

An additional dimension of the theoretical framework emerges from the intersection of sexual politics and political subjectivity. The testimonies from the women of Marivan reveal how accusations of sexual impropriety were used to delegitimize their political participation. As Dalila Rostami recalls: "The enemy, against us, was making propaganda, saying that these people are communists and sleep with their brothers and sisters. But this camp was a stage for women to show their power and will" (Rostami, 2014). Similarly, Shamsi reports: "During the demonstrations, they (the Islamists) insulted the leftists by accusing them of being communists who don't believe in God, and, moreover, they told people that these communists are in favor of sexual freedom and even sleep with their brothers and sisters" (Shamsi, 2014).

These testimonies illustrate how sexual politics became a central battleground in the struggle for Kurdish women's political subjectivity. The association of feminism with communism and sexual impropriety reveals how patriarchal structures attempt to delegitimize women's political participation by casting it as a threat to traditional sexual morality. This dynamic adds a crucial dimension to our theoretical framework, highlighting how the control of women's sexuality functions as a mechanism for limiting their political agency.

The women's response to these accusations—continuing their political activities despite smear campaigns—demonstrates how the struggle for recognition in the love sphere (challenging traditional sexual norms) intersects with the struggle for recognition in the rights sphere (demanding political participation) and the solidarity sphere (creating new forms of collective identity). Their persistence illustrates how intersectional consciousness enables resistance against multiple forms of oppression simultaneously.

Conclusion and Theoretical Implications

This integrated theoretical framework suggests that the relationship between individual and collective liberation might be reconceptualized through careful attention to how different forms of recognition and consciousness interact across various locations and contexts. The framework demonstrates how Kurdish women's experiences might inform broader theoretical understanding of emancipatory politics by showing how apparent contradictions between different forms of liberation struggle can generate new forms of political consciousness and social organization.

Through concrete examples from Kurdish women's movements, we see how theoretical integration can illuminate practical pathways toward resolving the tension between individual and collective emancipation. This suggests that these forms of liberation might be mutually constitutive rather than inherently contradictory, pointing toward new theoretical and practical approaches to emancipatory politics.

The historical experiences of the women of Marivan, particularly in the Kani Miran camp, provide compelling empirical evidence for this theoretical framework. As one participant summarized: "In the camp, women played the main role... There was no labor division, we did not work for someone else, we took care of everything that happened, wherever we could" (Anonymous, 2014). This testimony illustrates how, in specific historical contexts, Kurdish women have created social arrangements that transcend the apparent contradiction between nationalist and feminist imperatives, suggesting that such synthesis is not merely a theoretical possibility but a lived re

The framework developed in this paper thus offers both theoretical resources for understanding the complex relationship between nationalism and feminism and practical insights for contemporary movements seeking to integrate collective and individual forms of emancipation.

By drawing on the rich historical experiences of Kurdish women activists, we can develop more

nuanced theoretical approaches to the persistent challenges of human liberation

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