

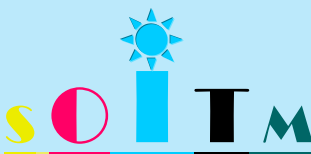
# Who owns Erbil? The Turkmen Case

**Sheth Jerjis**

Published by  
the Journal of Forum of Ethno GeoPolitics,  
Vol.10 Nos.1-2 Winter 2022



Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics



Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation



### *Main Article*

## Who owns Erbil? The Turkmen Case

Sheth Jerjis

*Abstract This article discusses the demographic changes of Turkmen regions as a result of the continuous Kurdish migration, specifically to Erbil Governorate, and the history of the Turkmen presence in the city. The article also provides detailed information on the history of the Kurdish tribes entering Iraq from Iran and the history of the emergence and development of the so-called Kurdistan region.*

### Introduction

The ease with which minorities are subjected to human rights abuses is well known in United Nations (UN) documents, but concealing the existence of an ethnic minority whose numbers in the millions should not be easy. However, this case occurred with the Turkmen of Iraq, under extremely unfavourable geopolitical circumstances. During the establishment of the Iraqi state after World War I, it was necessary to know the population number of Iraqi Turkmen, in order to determine to whom the Ottoman *Wilayat* (The state) of Mosul would be given. The result was dwarfing the size of the Iraqi Turkmen to 2%.

This invalid dwarfing of the actual population number of the Iraqi Turkmen can be considered one of the important factors that diverted the attention of the international, regional, and even Iraqi communities from the Iraqi Turkmen. The revised results of the 1957 census, which had shown the population number of the Iraqi Turkmen to be 9% of



total Iraqi population were forgotten (Knights 2004). As a result, the massive violations of their human rights and the drastic demographic changes in their areas were unnoticed, in the circumstances of the undemocratic nationalist culture of Iraq.

This article discusses the demographic changes of Turkmen regions as a result of the continuous Kurdish migration, specifically to Erbil Governorate, and the history of the Turkmen presence in the city. The article also provides detailed information about the history of the Kurdish tribes entering Iraq from Iran and the history of the emergence and development of the so-called Kurdistan region.

### Geohistory

Erbil has a long history dating back to the sixth millennium BC when it began as a small agricultural village. The city has taken different names, including Urbilum in the Shulgi correspondence (Gibson & Biggs 1987). It is believed that Erbil is a Sumerian word: *Ur* means city and *Bela* means high. In the Babylonian and Assyrian writings, the city was called *Arba'illo* or *Arba'ilu*. Leonhart Rauwolff used the name Harpel. James Silk Buckingham said in 1816 that residents were using Areveel and Arbeel.

The citadel of Erbil is considered the nucleus around which the city expanded. The major streets radiate from the edge of citadel and are intersected by three circular roads parallel to the boundaries of the citadel and to each other at different distances (See Map 1 in the Appendix).



Erbil city is nowadays located 320 kilometers from the current Iraqi capital, Baghdad. The borders of the present day Erbil Province are the Provinces of Dohuk, Nineveh and Salah al-Din in the west, Turkey in the north, Iran and Sulaymaniya Province in the east, and the Provinces of Sulaymaniya, Kerkuk (Kirkuk) and Salah al-Din in the south. The Upper and Lower Zab rivers pass on the northern and southern borders, respectively.

The largest empires from the Subarians around 3000 BC to the Parthians (247 BC to 224 AD) ruled the region of Erbil. Alexander the Great conquered Erbil in 331 BC. Erbil was an important administrative centre during the Sassanid era. The Arabs held the city in 642 AD after the Battle of Qadisiyah.

In 1055 AD, Iraq came under Seljuk sovereignty and from then on the Erbil region remained under the Turkic rule for nearly a thousand years, until the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918. The city was part of the Mosul region in 1127, when the founder of Atabeg state Imad al-Din Zangi was appointed as the ruler of Mosul by the Seljuk sultan. In 1144, Zayn al-Din Ali Kuchuk established the semi-independent state of Erbil Atabeg (Begtiginids 1144 to 1233 AD) (Stanley 1894).

Erbil flourished greatly during the Muzaffar al-Din Kokburu's period (1193 to 1233 AD). He built several buildings in the city, some of which are still standing today, for example the broken (Mudhaffariya) minaret, which is still considered one of the ancient historical monuments in the area. Then the city continued under the rule of the Atabeg of Mosul until 1232 AD (Encyclopedia Britannica 1992: 993-994; al-Zabit 1960: 66-72; Saatci 1996: 66-72).



Before Atabegs, the Erbil region was already under the control of the Qipchaq Turkmen (El-Azhari 2016). In 1258 AD, after a yearlong siege, the Mongol army—in which the Turkmen far outnumbered Mongols (Coon 1956)—invaded and occupied the city until 1410. The Jalayirids ruled from 1337, whom Tamerlane defeated in 1401 and ruled Erbil instead. Tamerlane released 100,000 Turkmen captives in 1402, who spread in the region (Edmonds 1950: 267). Between 1410 and 1508, the control of the city was alternated by the Qara Qoyunlu and the Aq Qoyunlu Turkmen states (Al-Zabit 1960: 73-100).

In 1501, Shah Ismail organised the Turkmen groups of the various tribes and established the Safavid state. In 1508, the Safavids annexed the city of Erbil to the Safavid state (Encyclopedia Britannica 1992: 985). In 1534, the Ottoman Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent completed the conquest of northern and central Iraq, and since that period Erbil remained under the control of the Ottoman Empire until the latter's fall in 1918. Throughout the last few centuries preceding the 20th century, Erbil took its share of the damage resulting from the continuous wars between the Ottoman Empire and the Empires that ruled Iran.

### Administration (Map 2)

The city of Erbil acquired its highest administrative status and became the capital during the reign of Atabeg Turkmen (1190 to 1232 AD). On a map of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi from 1261 and a map of Le Strange in the 14th century, Erbil was located in the al-Jazirah region. The city was included in the Shahrizur Wilayat when the 1590 treaty confirmed its status as Ottoman territory. Carsten Niebuhr in 1766, William Francis Ainsworth



in 1840 and the map of the Ottoman commissioner in the Treaty of Erzurum in 1848 considered Erbil to be linked to the Baghdad Wilayat (Longrigg 2002: 45; League of Nations 1924: 25-26).

Midhat Pasha (1869-1872) gave the name Shahrizur to the Sanjaq (province) of Kerkuk, and joined it with Erbil, which was part of the Wilayat of Mosul, according to Turkish deed records in October 1908.

In 1921, under the leadership of a deputy *Mutasarrif* (Governor), Erbil, including Rawandz and Koi Sanjaq, became a semi-autonomous district (semi-province) under the Kerkuk *Liwa* (Province). In 1923, according to the new administrative distribution introduced by the British Mandate, Iraq was divided into *Liwas* (Provinces), and Erbil was separated from Kerkuk, becoming an administratively independent district (Edmonds 1950: 25-26; Longrigg 1953: 131, 136, 283). In 1929, Makhmour was established as a sub-district of the Erbil Province.

After the establishment of the Safe Haven area in 1991, when Makhmour sub-district had become a district, it was separated from Erbil and annexed administratively to Nineveh province. In 1996, the district was officially attached to Nineveh province. After the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003, the Kurdish *Peshmerga* took over the area, including all the areas separated from Makhmour district since 1976, and brought it under Kurdish administration in Erbil.

When the Safe Haven was established, Erbil province was administratively separated from the Iraqi state and began to be ruled by Kurdish parties. The province was initially under the administration of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (یەكێتی نیشتمانپەروەری كوردستان).



In 1996, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (حزبی دیموکراتی کوردستان), in cooperation with the Ba'ath regime in Baghdad, expelled the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and took control of Erbil Province and subjected it to its administration. After 2003, it became the capital of Kurdish autonomous region (Jerjis 2020).

### Population and statistics

#### *Early period: before 1921*

This subsection covers information about the population of the city of Erbil before the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921. Travellers' estimates were generally relied upon during this early period.

Strabo (64 BC–24 AD), Plutarch (46–119 AD), and Arrian (86–146 AD) described Erbil as a very small place. The city expanded greatly when it became the capital of the Turkmen Atabeg state in 1144, which remained large for several centuries. Ibn Khallikan in the 13th century portrayed the city as a thriving educational centre for the Sunni religious sect. In the same century, Yaqut described Erbil as the great suburbs extending beyond the citadel. Rauwolff was there in 1570s, and he observed that the city was very large and walled (Ray 1738: 164–165).

After continuous wars between Ottoman and Iranian Empires in 17th and 18th centuries, the city became either the castle alone or with a small part at its foot. That is very clear from Niebuhr's description of the city in 1766. He wrote: "Now there is little more left than the Castle, .. There are only a few bad houses down on the hill, where the big city once lay" (Niebuhr 1776).



In 1813, John MacDonald Kinneir stated: “The town has diminished into a miserable mud town, with a population of no more than three thousand. Part of this town is built on a hill and the rest of the town surrounds the base of the hill” (Kinneir 1813). Buckingham, in 1816, estimated the city’s population at about five thousand, and did not accept the figure of 10,000 regarding its inhabitants. In his time, the greater part of the city was around the foot of the castle (Buckingham 1827: 325).

In 1820, Claudius James Rich considered the greater part of the city at the foot of the mountain and another part on the hill (Rich 1972: 15-19). Al-Munshi al-Baghdadi in 1822 estimated the number of houses at five thousand, four thousand of them at the foot of the citadel (Aga Kasap 1999: 17).

After a plague visited the city of Erbil, Lieutenant-Colonel J. Sheil found that in the 1830s the lower part of the city was in ruins and deserted. Horatio Southgate (1837) and Dr. Henry Lobdell found the same smaller lower part. Southgate estimated that the hill contained 1,000 houses and the lower part had 500 houses. Vital Cuinet towards the end of the 19th century—based on Ottoman figures, which probably included only males—gave the population of Erbil at 3,757. The Mosul Province’s *Salname of the Ottoman Empire of the year 1912* showed that the number of males in the Erbil district was 14,181 (Eoğlu 2012).

Erbil’s population doubled between 1890 and 1914. An estimate carried out by the British Mandate in 1920 found that there were 521 homes in the citadel, including 133 in Top Khana, 212 in Takya, and 176 in Saray Neighbourhoods. The British officer for the Erbil District, William R. Hay (1918-1920) estimated the population of Erbil to be around 14,000 (Hay 1921: 27).





### *Intermediate period: 1918-2003*

This period extends from the date of the establishment of the Iraqi state to the fall of the Ba'ath regime.

Discussions of the problem of the Ottoman Wilayat of Mosul, which lasted for eight years starting from the end of the First World War in 1918 until 1926, required a study of the ethnic nature of the population of the Wilayat. The United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Iraq were competing with Turkey for the ownership of the Wilayat of Mosul, which included the present-day provinces of Nineveh, Erbil, Kerkuk and Sulaymaniya. Accordingly, all estimates of the population of the Wilayat given by the Turks, the British and the Iraqi state were seriously politicised.

The problem was discussed in the negotiations of the League of Nations, at Lausanne and finally in the International Court of Justice at The Hague. The League of Nations established a fact-finding commission that included Count Paul Teleki, the former Hungarian Prime Minister, Einar af Wirsén, the Swedish Minister Plenipotentiary, and Colonel Albert Paulis (Belgium) to visit northern Iraq to investigate the case.

The large number of Iraqi Turkmen was in favour of Turkey in this dispute. In this context, Wallace Lyon said: "Thus, although these Turkomans, as they were called, were a more law-abiding element than either the Arabs or Kurds, they formed a definite flaw in our claim for the retention of the Mosul Province still in dispute" (Fieldhouse 2001: 107).

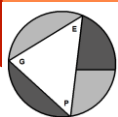


Although the real population size of Iraqi Turkmen alone was not enough to help annex the province of Mosul to Turkey, Turkey was sure that a good proportion of Arabs and Kurds were also supportive of remaining under Turkish rule and rejecting British control. Examples are:

- The Twentieth Revolution that started from Mosul.
- Sheikh Mahmoud Al-Barzanji's rebellion in Sulaymaniya.
- When the League of Nations committee visited Mosul, Javad Pasha, a member of the Turkish delegation, along with the head of the committee Paul Teleki, went out to the streets to feel the pulse of the people of Mosul. Immediately there were demonstrations in support of Turkey. The demonstrators surrounded Jawad Pasha and several of them kissed his hands. Others echoed the slogans of Mustafa Kemal's life (League of Nations 1924: 8).

Turkey had requested the organisation of a referendum in the Wilayat of Mosul to find out which of the two countries, Turkey or Iraq, the people of the Wilayat wanted. However, the British and Iraqi governments refused the Turkish request, and relied on the British population estimates of 1919 and 1921, and the so-called population census of 1922-1924 for the Iraqi state, all of which had intentionally underestimated the number of Turkmen in the region to a large degree. Note that the commission of the League of Nations considered these statistics unreliable (League of Nations 1924: 32). Later, these statistics were all considered incorrect and neglected by the Iraqi state.

The British estimate of 1921 for the number of Iraqi Turkmen in the Wilayat of Mosul was 65,895, while the Turkish estimate was 146,960.



The Iraqi government further reduced the number of Turkmen in Mosul to 38,652 based on the so-called Iraqi census of 1922-1924. The same thing happened with the number of Turkmen people in Erbil province. While the British estimated the number of Turkmen in Erbil province in 1921 at 15,000, which represented 14% of its total population, the Iraqi state reduced this estimated number to 2,780 i.e. down to 1.5% of the province's total population (League of Nations 1924: 33, 77).

The number of Turkmen officials (employees) in Erbil province in 1930 was 29 out of 181, which means 16 per cent. The British-Iraqi estimate of the population of Erbil province in 1930 was 106,134, of whom 9,921 were Turkmen (9.4%). Another British-Iraqi statistic for the year 1931 estimated the number of Turkmen in Erbil province at 9,038 out of the total population of 107,740, which represents 8.4% of this population (Dundar 2012). Thus, it is clear that the Iraqi statistics at the time had reduced the number of Iraqi Turkmen further than that the British estimates had ever done.

Depending on these figures related to the number of Turkmen in Erbil, and because the Turkmen of Erbil province were and still are almost only in the city of Erbil, the vast majority of the population of the city of Erbil should have been Turkmen.

This intermediate stage was also marked by the emergence of Arab nationalism, which reached its climax with the Ba'ath regime after 1968. Then the Kurdish nationalist feeling and their unbridled desire to establish a state appeared which led them to an armed uprising against the Iraqi state in 1961.



In these fierce nationalist sentiments and consequent circumstances together with the absence of a democratic culture in Iraq, one would not expect fair censuses and fair population statistics to reflect the reality of the population size of minorities.

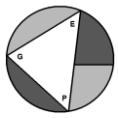
Even the 1947 census was criticised for its various deficiencies, during which ethnicities were not recorded, and all population estimates and censuses before it were considered failures (Lebon 1953; Hassan 2018: 6).

Ethnicity began to be recorded in Iraqi censuses again with the 1957 census, which most international sources consider reliable. But the Iraqi Turkmen have had reservations about the results regarding their population in this census. As for the censuses that followed the 1957 one, they were all considered politicised and unreliable (International Crisis Group 2008). All the ethnic Iraqi communities were also forced to register themselves as Arabs or as Kurds, and they were also forced to change their nationality to Arab (Human Right Watch 2003).

It is worth noting that, after the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003, when the entire governing regime in Iraq changed, the official Iraqi authorities began to recognise and present the true size of the Iraqi Turkmen. The Iraqi Ministry of Planning gave the percentage of the Iraqi Turkmen in 2013 in the national population to be about 10% (Bassem 2016).

Other factors affected the demographics in northern Iraq, including the city of Erbil, at this stage, which are:

- The economic boom that occurred in most regions of northern Iraq after the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921 as a result of the discovery of oil in the provinces of Nineveh, Kerkuk and Khanaqin



district, which were close to the Kurdish regions at that time. This led to the emigration of large numbers of Kurds to these provinces. As there was no any oil found in it, the expansion of the city of Erbil was not of the same magnitude. There appeared three neighbourhoods in the city of Erbil, one shown in the 1947 census and two in the 1957 census.

- The armed Kurdish movement played a major role in the large waves of Kurdish migrations to the plains, especially the provinces of Kerkuk and Erbil.
  - This armed movement began in 1961;
  - In 1975, after the signing of the Treaty of Algiers in which the Shah of Iran stopped supporting Mustafa Barzani, the Iraqi army overran northern Iraq and defeated the Barzani rebellion, causing hundreds of thousands of Kurds to flee to Iran and to neighbouring Iraqi provinces, with Erbil province being one of the nearest regions;
  - In the second half of the 1970s, the Iraqi government paid large sums of money to Kurdish *Aghas* (feudal lords), particularly from the Suruji, Khaylani, and Khosh Naw tribes, and purchased large tracts of land in the Northern provinces. As a result, large numbers of Kurdish villagers left their areas to settle in the centres of the Northern provinces;
  - Another wave of migration occurred when the demolition of villages, especially Kurdish, in the Northern provinces began towards the end of the 1970s;
  - In 1987 and 1988, the Anfal operations by the Saddam regime against the Kurds led to the demolition of dozens of villages and some sub-districts in the Northern provinces, leading to the migration of other larger waves of Kurds to the province centres, including the city of Erbil;
  - After the establishment of the Safe Haven in 1991, the Ba'ath regime expelled many Kurdish and Turkmen families to the Safe Haven, including the city of Erbil.



With the exception of the official statistics published on the ethnic components during the 1920s Mosul problem and the population statistics of the 1957 census about the ethnic nature of the Kerkuk province, it is very difficult to arrive at any official statistics on the ethnicities for this intermediate period, being the unfavourable minority policies of the successive nationalist Iraqi governments.

Depending on obscure sources, many unreliable population statistics about the Turkmen of Iraq were published mainly by Kurdish writers, which were later referred to extensively by Western writers and scholars. For example, this concerns the given numbers and percentages of Turkmen in the 1965, 1977 and 1997 censuses. Those suspicious figures provided by the Kurdish writer Nuri Talabani, were referred to and effectively adopted by a large number of Western sources, such as the book *Crisis in Kirkuk: The ethno-politics and compromise* (Anderson & Stansfield 2009: 40).

### *Late period: after 2003*

During this period, the administrative system of the Iraqi state has completely collapsed. Thus it is no longer possible to conduct a population census since 1997 and to this day, despite the urgent need for population statistics for several key reasons, including:

- Determining the number of voters;
- Determining the Kurdish region's share of the state budget.

After the establishment of the Safe Haven in 1991 and onwards, the Kurdish authorities began recording population estimates for the three Kurdish governorates, including Erbil province. The latter province had



a population of 770,439 according to the 1987 census. According to the internal report of the directorate of groundwater-Kurdistan region for the year 2012, the population estimates of the Erbil province for the following years were as follows, 1,095,992 in 1997, 1,315,239 in 2003, and 1,542,421 in 2008 (Dizayee 2010).

Contrary to the aforementioned figures, and intended for the distribution of income from the UN Oil-for-Food program, in 2003 the Kurdish authorities gave an exaggerated figure of 1,845,166 for the population of Erbil province (Suleiman 2018). According to this inflated Kurdish statistics the share of the three Kurdish governorates from that program increased further to 17% (Knights 2004).

The population figures of the three Kurdish provinces, provided by the Kurdish authorities, showed other discrepancies. For example, this concerns the figures related to the population numbers of the three Kurdish provinces. The population number of the three Kurdish provinces for the year 1997, which was estimated based on the 1987 statistics, was 2,861,701 (UNDP 2014).

As for the population of those provinces provided by the Kurdish authorities in 2010, this estimate was 4,503,901. This would mean that the population of the Kurdish region had increased by 36.5%, while the population of the other fifteen Iraqi provinces increased by 31.5% in the same time period (Ministry of municipalities and public works 2015).

It should be noted that hundreds of thousands of Kurds lived outside the three Kurdish provinces before the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003. After that, a similar number of Kurds moved from the three Kurdish



provinces to settle in large neighbouring areas in the provinces of Kerkuk, Salah al-Din, Diyala and Mosul, which were controlled by the Kurdish parties and the Peshmerga directly after the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003.

One should note that the 1957 census, which the international community considers the most reliable of all Iraqi censuses, indicated with regard to the number of minority populations, that the proportion of the Kurdish population throughout Iraq was 13% (Knights 2004).

With these exaggerated statistics provided by the Kurdish authorities, the Kurdish parties in 1996 were able to force UN officials and the Iraqi opposition to accept the 13 percentage figure of Kurds in these three Kurdish provinces alone. Accordingly, the Kurdish parties received 13% of the income of the Oil-for-Food Program for the Kurds in the three Kurdish provinces only.

After the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003, with the further exaggeration of Kurdish population numbers in the three Kurdish provinces, the Kurdish authorities were able to force Shiite parties, inexperienced in management, to officially increase the Kurdish population of the three Kurdish regions to 17%. Accordingly, after the fall of the Ba'ath regime, the Kurdish regional government began to receive 17% of the Iraqi budget for the Kurds in the three Kurdish provinces only.

The Iraqi elections are another field from which the Kurds benefited from inflating their population numbers. This exaggeration can also be easily seen in the voter lists for all Iraqi elections. This has led to a significant increase in the number of Kurdish parliamentarians in the





Iraqi parliament.

For instance, in a research study on the ethno-botany and trade in medicinal plants conducted by Uppsala University of Sweden in Qaysariya-Erbil in 2010, the number of medicinal herbalists was accounted to be twenty-three persons, thirteen of whom were of Turkmen origin, while nineteen of them spoke the Turkmen language (Mati & De Boer 2010).

**Table 1 Population statistics related to the Erbil province**

	1921	1932	1935	1947	1957	1965	1977
Erbil City				26,100	39,913		193,558
Erbil central district				86,000	34,751	95,592	
Erbil Province	106,000*	106,775	180,671	240,000	272,526	373,861	541,500

	1987	1997	2005	2007	2018	2020
Erbil City	445,912		993,991	808,600	979,071	
Erbil central district						
Erbil Province	770,439	1,095,992	1,392,093	1,542,421	1,854,778	1,940,838

\* The inconsistency in the numbers is due to the nature of those statistics; for example, see the closeness of the number belonging to the statistics of 1921 and 1932

## Demography

In the 1920s, the city of Erbil consisted of two parts, the citadel and outside the citadel, each of which consisted of three neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods of the citadel were al-Saray, Top Khana and al-Takiya, while those outside the citadel were Khanqa, Taajil and Arab.



The name of the Arab one came as a result of housing a few Arab families there at the beginning of the formation of the neighbourhoods.

The fourth neighbourhood in the northern part of the city, which was called Mustawfi-Tayrawa, appeared in the 1947 census. In the 1957 census, the neighbourhoods of Saydawa and Sadunawa appeared in the south of the city.

After the armed Kurdish movement began in 1961, the number of neighbourhoods in the city increased faster, reaching to seventeen neighbourhoods in 1975: Al-Qalaa (Three neighbourhoods), Khanqa, Taajil, Arab, Mustawfi-Tayrawa, Saydawa, Sadunawa, Khabat, Ronaki, Azadi, Rizgari, Brayati, Horoush, Zaniari and Salah al-Din (Aga Kasap 1999: 19).

With the massive violations of human rights under the Ba'ath regime and the beginning of the demolition of Kurdish villages, by the 1980s the number of Erbil neighbourhoods increased to thirty-two. The following neighbourhoods were added to the city: Sitkan, Iskan, Goran, Mudhaffariyah, Mantikawa, Ulama, Police, Muhandesin, Iktisadiyyin, 7 Nisan, Ninety-two, Ninety-nine, Muallimin, Zanko and Askari (Al-Haydari 2011) (see Map Nos. 1 & 3 in the Appendix).

As a result of the catastrophic political events, the city of Erbil expanded tremendously after 1985, as the number of neighbourhoods became eighty-two in 2012 (Al-Haydari 2011).

The demographic changes before the fall of the Ba'ath regime were mainly caused by the conflict between the Iraqi government and the Kurdish parties and the racist policies of the Ba'ath regime.



After the fall of Ba'ath regime in 2003, the Kurdish authorities began to bring about demographic changes of their own. As of 2013, with the aim of dismantling the Turkmen presence in Erbil, the Kurdistan Regional Government had emptied the Turkmen neighbourhoods Khanaqa, Taajil and Arap in the centre of the city, which are considered the oldest ones of Erbil city (information taken from an anonymous source within the Kurdish regional authorities; the source's identity remains anonymous so as to safeguard his or her safety) Note that, to this day, the Turkmen in Erbil city are subjected to pressure in the educational, administrative and political fields (Lalani 2010).

### Turkmen of Erbil City

Erbil province is one of the Iraqi provinces in which almost all Iraqi ethnic components live. The Kurds constitute the majority of the population, and the Turkmen are found almost only in the city of Erbil, while the Arabs are generally found in the Makhmur district. Until the 1970s, Christians almost entirely inhabited the cities of Ainkawa and Qush Tepe. It should be noted that the pro-Kurdish British political officer Cecil John Edmonds had mistakenly considered the population of Qush Tepe to be 100% Kurdish in 1947 (Edmonds 1950: 439).

Being subject to dramatic and prolonged demographic changes and given that the Kurds claim ownership of almost all of the land belonging to the Iraqi minorities, which includes most of the Turkmen regions, the history of the ethnic nature of the region will unfairly help to consolidate the Kurdish claim.



The term 'Iraqi Turkmen' is a very old one, extending back to before the Seljuk rule of Iraq, to the early Persian and Arab historians such as Abu al-Fadl al-Bayhaqi and Ibn al-Athir. The Turkmen were present throughout Iraq, Upper Mesopotamia i.e. present day northern Iraq and in Iraq Ajam i.e. southern and central Iraq (Beihammer 2017; UNESCO 1998). Assigning the Turkmen to Iraq in that early period means that they have been there for a long time before.

If the Sumerians, whose origins go back to the Altaic peoples as the Turkmen and the Turks (Papakitsos & Kenanidis 2013), and the Sassanid period in which large waves of Turkic peoples migrated to the Near East (Paksoy 1992) are excluded, the first appearance of the Turkmen in Iraq is considered to have happened during the Umayyad Caliphate (Samanci 1999).

The Turkmen constituted the second largest component of the population of Iraq during the Buyid rule (Al-Duri 1970). Turkmen soldiers became the main military forces of the Buyid army, then their number increased to the point where they dominated the army and political life in the Abbasid era (Encyclopedia Britannica 1992: 980-983). With the coming of the Seljuks in 1055, the number of Turkmen increased dramatically in Iraq.

Despite its prominent geographical location and its great historical fortress, there are very few historians who ever commented on the city of Erbil before the emergence of the rule of the Turkmen Atabeg in 1127, which was followed by the rule of the Turkmen Qipchaq. After that, enormous amounts of information can be found about developments in Erbil city, but very few sources provide information about the city's



population makeup.

In the Seljuk period, when Erbil was given to Atabegs, Qipchaq Turkmen was already ruling the region with a huge number of Turkmen (El-Azhari 2016). Towards the end of the 14th century, two events that occurred in the city of Erbil provide some information about the ethnic composition of its inhabitants. It is clear from two incidents that the population of the city was more than three thousand and there were two clans of the Mongol Turks, the Christian Qayachi clan and the Muslim Nauruz clan, with some Kurds and Arabs (Minorsky 1957).

The Persian sources had generally ignored the Kurdish presence at that period. The historian al-Mutawfi (1281-1349 AD), wrote on Erbil region in much detail, but never mentioned that there were Kurds in Erbil (De Nicola & Melville 2016). This ignorance can be due to the fact that the term 'Kurds' did not mean an ethnic community until the recent past:

- The 9th century historian Yaqubi mentioned the Kurds in al-Jibal district of Iran as people talking Persian (Ozoglu 2004: 26);
- The famous Arab historian al-Tabari, in his book *The History of al-Tabari*, which consists of more than thirty volumes, mentioned the word 'Kurds' more than ten times in reference to the cultivators and the Persian Nomad (Al-Tabari 1989).
- David McDowall said: "Certainly, by the time of the Islamic conquests a thousand years later, and probably for some time before, the term 'Kurd' had a socio-economic rather than ethnic meaning. It was used of nomads on the western edge of the Iranian plateau" (McDowall 1996: 9);
- Marco Polo wrote in the 13th century: "Among its (Mosul's) mountains are people called Kurds, who are Nestorian and Jacobite



Christians, but some are Saracens, and reverence Mohammed” (Polo 1855).

Stephen Hemsley Longrigg supported the thesis of the Turkmen character of the city of Erbil in the 15th and 16th centuries. When speaking of the 17th century, he wrote: “Neither the pleasant city of Kerkuk, nor the string towns on the main route, nor the many villages of rain-cultivators, had changed character in the last two centuries. Turkish influence, where government found blood, tongue and religion congenial, had deepened more than the Arab plains or Kurdish mountains even made possible” (Longrigg 2002: 96).

In another statement, when Longrigg spoke of the 16th century, he noted: “Arbil—strikingly similar to Kerkuk in natural structure and in race—was as remote from its Arab and closer akin to its Kurdish Neighbours” (Longrigg 2002: 10-11).

Rich was one of the earlier travellers to comment on the population nature of the city of Erbil, asserting that the residents were Kurds and Turks: “The people of Arbil are Koords and Turks” (Rich 1972: 296). On another occasion, Rich distinguishes between the people of the city of Erbil and the Kurds: “Routes procured at Arbil, both from Koords and Arbil People” (Rich 1972: 15-19).

It seems that in 1909, Ely Bannister Soane meant that population of Erbil Province and not Erbil city was inhabited by Baban Kurds: “Erbil is populated by Baban Kurds, a sedentary tribe, speaking a variation of the Mukri dialect. Turkish is also understood, or rather Turkoman, for Altun Keupri and Kirkuk, Turkoman towns, are not far off” (Soane 2013 (1912)); otherwise, Soane would have contradicted the sources of his time.



Colonel T. B. Mark Sykes, of the Sykes-Picot Treaty, who considered Erbil's largest urban community to be Turkmen, suggested that Erbil be excluded from the proposed autonomous southern Kurdistan: "And finally, an autonomous Southern Kurdistan excluding Kerkuk, Altun Kupru and Arbil where the largest urban communities were Turkoman" (McDowall 1996: 118).

In its response to the League of Nations' Mosul Committee, the British government admitted that it had published statements in Turkish regarding Erbil in the city of Erbil (League of Nations 1924: 38).

Hay, Lyon, and the 1924 League of Nations Commission must be more reliable sources than travellers who visited Erbil for a few days, sometimes for just a few hours. Hay was the chief administrator of the Erbil region for about two years from 1918 to 1920. Lyon had worked in the Kurdish region of Iraq for 26 years. The League of Nations commission included high-ranking international politicians and specialists who had studied northern Iraq at the site for a month, particularly the presence of ethnicities.

Hay considered Erbil a Turkmen city: "Starting from with the Nebi Yunus on the bank of the Tigris opposite Mosul, and running down through Erbil, Altun Kopri, Kerkuk, Kifri and Kizil Rabat to Mandali we find a line of towns with Turkmen speaking inhabitants" (Hay 1921: 82-83).

Hay provided important information about the ethnic nature of the city of Erbil, considering that there was only one Kurdish neighbourhood in it, and that the remaining ones were Turkmen: "One mahalla or quarter of the town is purely Kurdish, and in the rest the lower classes resemble



the Kurds in appearance and dress. All can speak Kurdish fluently, but the language of their homes is Turkish. In the upper town, which contains 6,000 inhabitants, the purest Turkish element is found" (Hay 1921: 82-83).

Here Hay refers indirectly to the conversion of Turkmen to Kurd. There is no doubt that the mountainous areas in northern Iraq were the scene of the Turkmen presence and housing when the Kurds were still in Iran, especially during the periods of the rule of the Seljuks, the Atabeg, the Jalayirids, the state of 'white sheep' and the state of 'black sheep'.

The complete absence of the Turkmen presence in those regions today indicates two possibilities: either they converted to the Kurdish identities, or they migrated from their regions. There was still a Turkmen presence in those areas until to the first decades of the 19th century. In this regard:

- In 1818, Giuseppe Campanile considered that the people of the three Kurdish principalities, which constituted almost all of the Iraqi Kurdish regions today, could speak the Turkmen language too: "I cannot deny that in Soran, Babà and Karacciolan, they sometimes speak Turkish"; he added that the population of Koy Sanjaq was all Turkmen: "This city (Koy Sanjaq) makes about 10,000 souls. They are all Turks and a few Jews" (Campanile 1818: 42-55). Note that today, there are no Turkmen regions and even no Turkmen speakers in all those regions that used to be the three Kurdish emirates; indeed all sources today consider Koy Sanjaq, which is one of the largest districts of Erbil province, as one of the historical Kurdish regions;
- In 1820, Rich talked in detail about a Turkmen region including several villages in Bazyan district near Sulaymaniya city, which he called





Derghezeen: "The people of Derghezeen are of Turcoman origin, and still retain their language, and their appearance is sufficiently distinguishable from that of the Koordish peasantry" (Rich 1972: 4-9). Note that today, even the eastern regions of Kerkuk province are inhabited entirely by Kurds, and that Sulaymaniya province is devoid of Turkmen.

The Iraqi writer Razzuq Issa mentioned in his book *A Brief Geography of Iraq* that the majority of the population of the city of Erbil consists of Turks (Isa 1922).

In 1924, the League of Nations commission found that all residents of the city of Erbil were of Turkish origin. It reported: "In the central Qaza of Arbil, the people of the chief town and, generally speaking, all the inhabitants of Turkish origin were in favour of Turkey" (League of Nations 1924: 77).

The committee's report also included other details about the Turkmen nature of the city of Erbil, stating: "The town of Arbil is divided into seven boroughs. We interviewed the Mukhtars of these boroughs. When asked what was their nationality five replied that they were Turks, one that he was as much a Turk as a Kurd, and the seventh stated that he was a Jew" (League of Nations 1924: 77).

Lyon considered that the Turkmen nature of the city of Erbil is easy to be distinguished, stating: "Along the road to Mosul and onwards to Turkey are numerous villages inhabited by people of Turkish origin speaking the Turkish tongue. At any rate Kerkuk and Arbil are outstanding examples" (Fieldhouse 2001: 87).



Hanna Batatu, who wrote about the 1950s, described the Kurdification of Erbil city as very pronounced, writing: “Other Turkish towns, such as Arbil, had undergone a similar process. Arbil itself was in great measure Kurdified” (Batatu 1978: 913).

Batatu added: “The district of Arbil embraced sixty-five villages populated entirely by Kurds, but no fewer than forty-five of these villages were owned by one or other of the Arbil notables, who were mostly Turkomans by race. In the town of Arbil itself, the latter belonged, to be sure, to the wealthy stratum and had their residences on the top of a circular mound about 150 feet high, while the Kurds, formed three-quarters” (Batatu 1978: 45).

Note that the number of neighbourhoods in the city of Erbil in the 1950s was nine. It is also possible to identify the Kurdification of the Erbil regions or the migration of Turkmen from the Turkmen names of a large number of villages and towns in Erbil province, where there are no Turkmen today.

Contemporary Kurdish historian Saadi Haruti supports the Turkmen nature of the Erbil region in the recent past, writing: “About a century ago, under Ottoman rule, the area was populated largely by Turkmen. Kurds who arrived to Erbil from the surrounding villages tended to learn Turkish. Sometimes they even forgot their own language” (Dziadosz 2017).

### Arrival of the Kurds

Since the borders of so-called Kurdistan have never been clearly



delineated, today it is a major problem for Iraq and other neighbouring countries. The Kurds claim vast Iraqi lands, considering them as historical Kurdish regions within larger Kurdistan and the property of the Kurdish people, which are consequently called the 'disputed areas'. They persist in this claim, despite the presence of millions of multi-ethnic indigenous peoples inhabiting the region even before the arrival of the Kurds by many centuries. The city of Erbil has been made the capital of Kurdistan, and has already been accepted by the international community as the historical Kurdish region.

Additionally, the Kurdish region receives enormous privileges today as a result of the ambiguity of its borders and the number of its population. This situation makes the discussion about the history of the demographic and ethnic composition of Erbil province of vital importance so as to shed light on the demographic and political changes taking place in the state of Iraq.

The British intelligence Bureau of 1917 portrayed the Kurds as "An Iranian people, speaking Persian dialects, their original home is in the mountain ranges, which separate the plateau of Persia from the basin of Mesopotamia" (Intelligence Bureau 1917).

As for Edgaer O'Balance, he presents a rigorous picture of the Kurdish influx from those Iranian plateaus towards Iraq in the 19th century. He states: "Right up until the end of the 19th century the sight of a large tribal federation with all its livestock, moving across the mountains and plains of the northern parts of the Middle East in search of fresh grazing, was both splendid and ominous—as nomadic Kurds moved like a plague of locusts, feeding and feuding" (O'Balance 1973: 33).



Indeed, according to Phebe Marr: “In recent history, Kurds have been migrating from the mountains into the foothills and plains, many settling in and around Mosul in the north and in the cities and towns along the Diyala River in the south” (Marr 1985: 9).

The historical Turkmen regions, which extend from north-western Iraq to the Iraq-Iran border in central Iraq, along the foothills mainly on the Old High Way, are the Iraqi territories closest to Kurdish migration. A huge number of Kurds settled in the Turkmen regions. Erbil province and its centre received a large share of this intense and continuous migration.

Travellers from the 13th century until the end of the 19th century described the ancient High Way (see Map 4 in the Appendix) running from Baghdad through Kerkuk to Erbil to Mosul and then towards the Iraqi-Syrian border as uninhabited deserts (Le Strange 1930: 58; 1981).

Buckingham had considered the language of all those villages and towns along the highway (Baquba-Mosul) to be Turkmen. Buckingham also travelled from Baghdad to Persia via Khanaqin to Qasr Shirin, and described the inhabitants of Shahraban (Miqdadiya), Mandali and Khanaqin, asserting that the majority of them spoke the Turkmen language (Buckingham 1827: 323-356; Buckingham 1829: 1-18).

Kurds are present today in almost all regions of the old High Way, and constitute the majority in many towns, for example Kifri and Khanaqin, considering them today as historical Kurdish regions.



The Commission of the League of Nations described the Kurdish arrival to these regions as follows: “while the towns and villages along the high road running to Baghdad were mainly Turkish speaking, being Turkmen. However, as the commission noted, the Kurd ‘is taking possession of arable land and is Kurdizing certain towns’, especially the Turkmen ones of the high road” (League of Nations 1924: 144).

Hay described Kurdification of the Erbil plain in much detail: “I will conclude this chapter by briefly enumerating the principal Kurdish tribes living between the two Zabs... They descended from the hills about three centuries ago, and occupied a few villages round Qush Tepe for a considerable period they paid tribute to the Arabs. About sixty years ago they started to expand, and rapidly covered the whole country up to the Tigris, displacing the nomad Arabs who had previously roamed it at will” (Hay 1921: 77).

A careful review of Kurdish history in Iraq brings researchers to the Barzanji tribe, which is considered one of the largest Kurdish tribes in the Sulaymaniya and Kerkuk regions. It belongs to the al-Saada (Prophet’s family) of Arab origin, as their family tree shows (Edmonds 1950: 69). In about the year 1360 AD, this tribe originated from two brothers who resided in the Barzanji area in the Sulaymaniya province, coming from the Hamadan region in Persia (Van Bruinessen 1992: 216).

The date of the Kurdification of this family is not known. Several Kurdish tribes such as the Talabani, the Naqshbandi and the Khanaqah, who make up the majority of the Kurds of Erbil city and Kerkuk province, are sub-tribes of the Barzanji tribe.



Among the largest Kurdish tribes today, the Zangana tribe—which is one of the tribes of the Hamedan plains (Avery 1991: 98), along with the Hamawand and al-Jaf tribes—constitute the nucleus of most of the Kurdish tribes in Iraq that were still in Persia in the 16th century. Zangana ruled Kermanshah throughout the period of the al-Zand state from 1765 to 1779 (Longrigg 2002: 6). McDowall considered Zangana tribe to be of Turkmen origin (McDowall 1996: 160).

The large Goran tribe, which includes the Zangana tribe and Sarulu, Baglan (Bagwan), Kakayi, Shabak and Ahli Haq branches, are known to be extremist Shias, actually being mostly non-Kurds. According to several references, for example, Rich, Lockhart, Matti Moosa, Ahmad al-Sarraf, al-Shaybi and Abbas al-Azzawi, these sects are considered primarily of Turkmen origin (Moosa 1988). Most of the regions of these groups were located either in or around the historical Turkmen areas, as in the areas of Tuz Khurmatu, Khanaqin and Tal Afar.

The majority of the Jaff tribe occupied the Jawanrud region of Persia in the 17th century. At the time of Edmonds' travels in the first half of the 20th century, the largest group of the Jaff tribe inhabited the area west of the Sirwan River. Edmonds dates Jaff's entry into Iraq to 1772 (Edmonds 1950: 141-142).

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Hamavand clan, which some sources consider to be a branch of the Kurdish al-Jaf clan, constituted the majority of the population in the eastern region of Kirkuk province, such as the Chamchamal and Bazian areas. It is assumed that this clan came from the Persian plateau in the early 18th century (Edmonds 1950: 39-40).



The majority of the Kurds of Erbil region are from the Dizai tribe. The descent of the Kurds from the mountains in this region is not ancient. Hay gave important information on this subject: "More than half the Arbil district, consisting of the Qara Choq desert, Kandinawah, and the most fertile portion of the plain, is occupied by the Dizai tribe, who also supply much of population of the so-called non-tribal villages, in other parts of the district. They must number nearly 30,000 souls" (Hay 1921: 77).

The Dizai's arrival to Erbil region was politically motivated. It began in the early 19th century when Ottomans appointed a certain Pasha from the Diza region on the Iranian border as a governor of Erbil, who managed to appropriate vast tracts of land in the fertile plain of Erbil. This situation helped the displacement of this tribe towards Erbil region and spread into the plains by conquest, eventually controlling most of the areas of Erbil (Van Bruinessen 1992: 93).

Hay traces the history of the rapid spread of this tribe in large areas in Erbil region to the 1860s: "They descended from the hills about three centuries ago, and occupied a few villages round Qush Tappah. ... About sixty years ago they started to expand, and rapidly covered the whole country up to Tigris" (Hay 1921: 77).

Hay also described the impact of the arrival of the Kurds in the Qush Tepe region as following: "It is reported that less than a century ago trees and shrubs were plentiful on the slopes of Qara Choq Dag; when the Kurds came, however, they were quickly taken for fire woods and no trace of them now remains" (Hay 1921 : 17-21) .



The expansion of the Kurds toward the west into the Erbil plains was at the expense of the Arab tribes, like Tai and Shammar (League of Nations 1924: 45). According to Robert L. Jarman, the Dizai tribe came from the Diza region in Persia in the later centuries. Jarman gave almost the same chronology which Hay gave, as if he supports O'Balance's description of the spread of the Kurds towards the Middle East.

Jarman wrote: "The Dizai tribe are said to have migrated three or four hundred years ago from Diza in Persia. Till the middle of the 19th century they only occupied Qush Tappah and the surrounding villages and used to pay tribute to the Tai Arabs. Eventually they threw off the Arabs' yoke and seized on the fertile valley of Kandiniwuh which was then uncultivated" (Jarman 1992: 44).

Hay portrayed the displacement of the Shammar Arab tribe by the Kurds and the latter's invasion of the west of Erbil province into the Makhmur region, when he was talking about an *Agha* (feudal lord) of Erbil called Ibrahim Agha: "Locally he was a maker of history, for thirty-eight years previously, in the days of his father, he had led a party of Kurds across Qara Choq Dagħ and founded Makhmour, where after several years of fighting first against Shammar Arabs, and then against the Turks, he had succeeded in establishing himself. Several others followed him, and it was thus due to his initiative that the Qara Choq desert became inhabited and cultivated" (Hay 1921: 165).

Another source considers the Dizai as the largest Kurdish tribe in the region and dates back their arrival to Erbil region from Iran to the 18th century: "The greatest of these tribes is the Dizai, whose *Aghas* (feudal lords) are said to have come into the region from Iran in the 18th century" (Biggs 1983: 40).





According to Al-Azzawi, the Kurdish Bilbas tribe, which with its branches are considered today one of the tribes of Erbil province, entered Iraq in 1597 (1005 AH) (Al-Azzawi 2005). Jean B. L. Rousseau, who was in Erbil in the early decades of 19th century, noted: "The Bilbas inhabited the mountains which extended into Persia beyond Kurdistan. ... In winter, its numerous families come to camp in the plain of Erbil" (Rousseau 1809: 102).

Khosh Naw is another Kurdish tribe, which is a large and rich one, inhabiting vast areas in the east of Erbil province. Like the Dizai and Jaf tribes, Khosh Naw came from Persia in the 18th century (Eagleton 1988: 27).

Regarding the arrival of the Kurdish tribes the Girdi and the Zirari to the province of Erbil, the League of Nation's report refers to the continuous migration over the past centuries: "Certain tribes, like the Girdis and the Zararis, came down, from two to four centuries ago, from the high plateau on the Persian frontier to the edge of the Arbil plain. It was only during the last century that the Disdais occupied the plain to the west of Arbil, which formerly the Arabs—the Thai and other tribes—had roamed with their flocks and had partly brought under cultivation. While they reached to the Qara Chau Mountains in around the beginning of the 19th century. It is only a quarter of a century ago that they crossed the Kara Chau Dagh to cultivate the plain along the Tigris" (League of Nations 1924: 45).

Thus the constant influx of Kurds into the Erbil region has dramatically influenced the Turkmen nature of the city and the majority of Turkmen regions generally in Iraq. In this regard, Walter Posch made the



following observation: “In Arbil, Kurdish came to replace Turkish as the dominant language in the first half of the 20th century, partly due to immigration, partly to the Kurdification of Turkish speakers” (Posch 2005: 51). However, even in the mid-20th century, the Turkmen was actually the dominant language in Erbil city.

### Kurdistan’s arbitrary boundaries

*Stan* is an ancient Persian word meaning ‘state’, and is widely used as a suffix to refer to a country of a particular people, for example, Hindustan, Turkestan and Kazakhstan. Kurdistan, which means ‘the country of the Kurds’, despite its widespread use for many centuries, is still considered an ambiguous term in administrative and geographical terms. The ambiguity of the origin of the word ‘Kurd’ and its different interpretations, and continuous mass immigrations of Kurds for many centuries to neighbouring countries, can be considered some of the reasons.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the boundaries of the so-called Kurdistan area began to be greatly inflated—especially inside Iraq, adding to it the historical lands of indigenous populations of various ethnicities. For this reason, every source provides another delineation of the boundaries of the region Kurdistan. To date, there are no reliable sources or a particular international authority that has adequately defined the location and geographical and cultural boundaries of the term Kurdistan.

The Seljuk’s Sultan Sanjar was the first to use the word ‘Kurdistan’ in the



middle of the 12th century, giving it to the western part of the Iranian Al-Jibal province (Le Strange 1930: 192). At that time, the Kurds and the Turkmen together constituted the majority of the people of the Iraqi-Ajam province (Holt 1970: 338), which was used as a synonym for the province of the al-Jibal, and sometimes for all western Iran.

A 14th century map referred to the location of Erbil as being very far away from Kurdistan: “Arbil, Mosul, Amadia and Mush are in the Dzezira, and Anah, Tekrit and Dakuk are in Iraq; and Kurdistan consists solely of the eastern (Persian) slope of the mountains” (League of Nations 1924: 25-26).

In the second half of the 16th century, an abnormal definition of the term Kurdistan appeared. Sharaf al-Din Bitlisi, and his contemporary Katip Chalabi, set unbelievable boundaries for Kurdistan. The boundaries of the map of each of them were starting from Malatya in the northwest, to the Caspian Sea in the northeast to Basra (Persian Gulf) in the south (Özoğlu 2004: 29,34). Later, travellers of the 17th and 18th centuries began to expand the Kurdistan region to a large degree, as some of them gave those given by Bitlisi.

In the 1570s, after passing the town of Tawuq towards Kerkuk, Rauwolff reported that they had entered to the province of Curters. However, his ‘Curters’ were Nestorians and could speak neither Persian nor Turkish (Ray 1738: 161-163,294), which makes them certainly not the Kurds of today, whose language is considered a dialect of Persian and are truer Muslims (Bel 1978).

In 1617, Pietro Della Valle, who was aware of the Sharaf al-Din Bitlisi’s



map of Kurdistan, gave almost the same boundaries of Kurdistan as Bitlisi's: "Curdistan, or the land of the Kurds, precisely separates Turkey from Persia, and has no latitude at most from East to West for ten or twelve days; but from the North to the Midia, it is very extensive, beginning between the country of Babylon, & the Province of Susiana, or Cusistan, towards the Persian Gulf, stretching to the North, above Nineveh, between the Armenia, & Media, fairly near the Euxine Sea" (Della Valle 1662).

In the 1780s, Thomas Howell passed through the old Highway from Baghdad towards Mosul, mentioning the word 'Kurd' once and 'Kurdistan' four times. Howell did not give any information about the language of the villages and towns he passed through, neither did he give any definition of the word Kurdistan, nor did he come across any Kurdish town on his way.

However, Howell considered the city of Kerkuk, as the capital of Turkish Kurdistan, and defined the Kurds as Devil worshipers. As for the language of the villages and towns in general, Howell mentioned that the inhabitants of the towns were Turks and the Kurds were nomads: "A few of them (Kurds) join the Turks in occupying the towns; but the greater number prefer a wondering, pastoral life, like the Arabs" (Howell 1789).

At about the same period in the 1790s, John Jackson went through the same route as Howell did, giving also no information about the composition of the population in the villages and towns. He mentioned each of the words 'Kurd' and 'Kurdistan' only once. Unlike Howell, Jackson considered the town of Altun Kopri the capital of Turkish



Kurdistan. Contrary to all reliable indications, Jackson considered that the vast majority of the population of the city of Mosul were Kurds (Jackson 1799).

Then came the Italian missionaries, who had remained in the region, especially in the cities of Mosul and Amadiya for more than a decade, and studied the region closely. Maurizio Garzoni reached Mosul in 1762 and lived there until 1788 (Galetti 2006). Campanile came to Mosul in 1802 leaving in 1815 (Galetti 2018). At the same period, Ottoman records also began to name some regions in present-day south-eastern Turkey and north-eastern today's Iraq as Kurdistan (Özoğlu 2004: 43-68).

In the second half of the 18th century, with these missionaries another Kurdistan appeared in the region which was utterly different from the Kurdistan of Bitlisi and Katip Chalabi and far from the first Kurdistan of Sultan Sanjar in the al-Jibal district of Iran (Le Strange 1930: 192).

Garzoni put Kurdistan as the region between Mesopotamia and Persia, unlike Bitlisi and Della Valle, who had placed Kurdistan between the Ottoman Empire and Persia. Garzoni listed five principalities, which were: Bitlis, Jazira (Bohtani), Amadia (Bahdinan), Julamerg (Hakkari) and Karacholan (Soran). Regarding Koy Sanjaq, Garzoni stated that after 1760 the Pasha of Baghdad gave it to the principality of Baban (Garzoni 1787).

At the beginning of the 19th century, doubts were revolving around the correctness of the information available to specialists about the term Kurdistan, possibly that of Bitlisi's Kurdistan. Campanile was in Mosul



from 1802 until 1819 and studied the religious, political and economic situation of the region. He noted: “So it should not be surprising if the news of Kurdistan is so strange and inaccurate that it has been recorded in the books of geography and travellers published so far”—and added two more principalities to Garzoni’s Kurdistan, which were the principalities of Agri and Baban (Campanile 1818: iv, 42-55).

The regions of Erbil and Kerkuk were located in the Shahrazor province, outside the Kurdistan region. Niebuhr wrote: “The remainder of the great Shahr essul province, which extends in this way from Tauk to Arbil, now belongs to Baghdad” (Niebuhr 1778: 332-339).

The Kurdistan region laid down by the missionaries is facing substantial criticism, which suggests that it was drawn arbitrarily thereby making it erroneous, because of:

- A large number of the population of those principalities, which were placed within the borders of Kurdistan, spoke the Turkmen language (Campanile 1818: 42-55);
- Many regions were still populated by Turkmen, such as the city of Koy Sanjaq and the region of Derghezeen of Baziyan district (Ibid: 42-55; Rich 1972: 4-9);
- An important part of Campanile’s Kurdistan, including the principality of Agri, was within the district of Turkmania at that time (See map No. 5 in the Appendix);
- The principality of Hakkari was completely inhabited by the Nestorians (Niebuhr 1778: 419);
- The number of Arab tribes was exceeding the number of Kurdish tribes in Al-Jazira principality (Ibid);



- Violent Kurdish migrations were continuing in those regions, and their arrival was overwhelming or displacing the indigenous population there (O'Balance 1973).

It is worth noting that the Shi'ism was politicised for the first time by the Safavids, and it became the ideology of the Safavid state. The centuries following the foundation of the Safavid state in 1501 AD were marked by continuous fierce wars between the Iranian Shia (Safavid) Empire and the Ottoman Sunni Empire. The Kurds had remained loyal to the Sunni doctrine (Bel 1978). During the same period, the immigration of large numbers of Kurdish tribes continued into Iraq and northwest towards Anatolia, which may explain the emergence of the Kurdistan of Bitlisi and that of the missionaries.

The observations of Rich in 1920 and George Thomas Keppel in 1924 refer to the borders of the Kurdish regions (Kurdistan) in the early 19th century in both Kirkuk and Diyala provinces. At the same time, they described the devastation inflicted on the Turkmen regions by Kurdish attacks.

The following concern Rich's observation about two regions in Kirkuk province, Laylan in the southeast of Kerkuk city and Qara Hasan in its east. As for Laylan village, which is today a sub-district, Rich wrote: "The village of Leylan like all the other villages on the Kurdish line, it is much harassed, and has been several times utterly ruined by the incursions of Kurds. The Kahya of the village entreated me to use my interest with Mahmud Pasha to get back 300 of his sheep, which had been carried off by the Kurds. The people of his and all the neighbouring villages are of Turkmen race" (Rich 1972: 45-47).



Equally relevant is what Rich mentioned about the region Qara Hasan: “The Qara Hasan is worth about 85,000 piaster annually, and extended in length about 6 hours. The late war, and the constant inroads of Kurds, have greatly depopulated this district, and proved very destructive to the agriculture” (Rich 1972: 45-47).

As for Keppel, when he was in the city of Shahraban in Diyala province, he described the following: “We reached Shahraban at eleven o’clock P.M., and found it almost entirely deserted. ... We wondered through the desolate street, some time without finding any house with inhabitants, till we came to a caravanserai, where we met a man who told us that all the inhabitants had left the place, which had been sacked and ruined by the Coords” (Keppel 1827).

Keppel said the same for the towns of Qizil Rabat, Qara Tepe, Khanaqin, and Baquba (Keppel 1827). Note that the Kurds are present today in abundance in this province and constitute the majority in some parts of the entire region.

Rich in 1820, Ainsworth in 1837 and James Baillie Fraser in 1842 placed almost all villages and towns on the old High Way including the cities of Erbil and Kerkuk at far distances outside the Kurdish region or so-called ‘Kurdistan’.

While in the city of Erbil, Rich noted: “Hawks of the Balaban species are also caught in this plain and exported chiefly to Koordistan” (Rich 1972: 296). Leaving the city of Erbil towards Mosul, Rich distinguished three chains of hills, one behind the other. He considered even these ranges as belonging to Erbil and not to Kurdistan: “I now can distinguish several





chains; 1st, the broken country, which is a continuation of Shuan; 2d, hills, a little higher; then one or two other higher and more rocky chains before Zagros, which peeped over all, and seemed higher and more broken into points, than any part of it we had yet seen. The lines of hills seem, I think, rather closer together than they are in Koordistan" (Ibid: 15-19).

Rich placed almost all the today's Kerkuk province, excluding Chamchamal region, out of the term Kurdistan. The southeast (Laylan region) and the east (Qara Hasan region) of the province have already been mentioned. Regarding the northeast of the province, he wrote: "We were still in the district of Shuan, which is regulated by a kind of territorial canon which I do not thoroughly comprehend: the soil belongs to Kerkook, but the peasantry to Koordistan"; and for the north of the province, he wrote: "At ten minutes before ten we arrived at the village of Kafar, our place of rest for to-day. The peasants are mostly in tents about the village. Here both lands and people belong to Kerkook, and we have fairly bid adieu to Koordistan" (Rich 1972: 4-9).

One should note that Rich considered the people in some regions here as 'Tcheragh Sonderans', which is a Turkmen name given to the extremist Shia, such as the Shabak. One must keep in mind that the name Shabak is formed from the union of the words Shah and Beg and appeared during the period of Shah Ismail of Safavid (Salman 2020).

Rich had placed Kifri district, located in the far southeast of Kerkuk province, which was detached from the province in 1976, at four hours away from Kurdistan (Rich 1972: 272). Fraser's remarks when he was in Kifri were as follows: "We were now within the Turkish dominions. ...



The servant were Turks, and everything around us announced a change of country as well as of People” (Fraser 1840: 149-150).

Buckingham mentioned the same for Kifri: “The caravanserai at which we put up, during our detention here, was like the one described at Baiaat, in the general style of its architecture, which was purely Turkish. ... the language, Features, and complexions of the inhabitants are chiefly Turkish. This circumstance, added to the fact of the caravanserai here, and at the last station, being of Turkish architecture” (Buckingham 1827: 348-349).

Ainsworth clearly emphasised the boundaries of the Kurdistan region in 1837, placing Kerkuk, Erbil and Mosul outside the Kurdistan: “In the present day, Kerkuk and Arbil are considered as towns attached to the Pashalik of Baghdad, and the ancient Adiabene forms part of the Pashalik of Mosul. It is not customary, although quite arbitrary, to consider the country of the plains W. (West) of the outlying ranges of hills in either of these Pashaliks as forming part of Kurdistan. Jezireh Zakho and Koi Sanjaq, like ‘Amadiyah’ and ‘Sulaymaniya’, are in the hills” (Ainsworth 1841: 21 endnote).

Fraser’s statement for Kurdistan was adamant that “part of Kurdistan which properly belongs to Assyria comprises only the small state of Sert, Jezirah ul Omar, part of the pachalic of Amadiéh, the government of Rewandooz, and the pachalic of Solymaneah” (Fraser 1842: 238).

After the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire and during the establishment of the Iraqi state, a large number of English officers, politicians and specialists worked in many fields to build the administrative systems of the Iraqi state.



The British sympathy was clearly with the Kurds, as the British state tried to build a state for them, according to the 1920 Treaty of Sevres. Many of these Britons working in Iraq had written rather many books and articles on all aspects of Iraq's life. Some of these over-presented the Kurdish presence in Iraq.

Edmonds is at the forefront of those who exaggerated the population number of the Kurds and considered large Iraq lands to be within the borders of Kurdistan, including the lands of all Iraqi minorities, such as those of the Turkmen and Christians.

Edmonds included almost all of northern Iraq within the boundaries of the so-called Kurdistan: "Iraqi Kurdistan is bounded on the north and east by the Turkish and Persian frontiers, where the population on both sides is almost entirely Kurdish. On the south-west the internal ethnical boundary lies approximately along the railway from the Syrian frontier to Mosul city on the Tigris and thence a straight line to Mandali on the Persian frontier" (Edmonds 1950: 52-62).

In his estimation of the percentages of Kurds in the towns in the north of Iraq, Edmonds exaggerated the Kurdish percentages in most of the regions, particularly those in the Turkmen regions (Edmonds 1950: 438-440).

As for Soane, a British intelligence officer who worked for many years in Iraq, he moved the borders of Kurdistan westward in 1909 to include the city of Erbil. While he was in the city of Erbil, he wrote "Here is the western border of southern Kurdistan" (Soane 2013 (1912):109), while the city of Erbil had a Turkmen majority until after the mid-20th century. Thus, the borders of Kurdistan were arbitrarily expanded by many



British mandate officers, politicians and specialists towards the west within the Turkmen regions. At the same time, these observations by British officials indicate the continuation of large Kurdish migrations to the region.

The arbitrary delineation of so-called Kurdistan's borders also appears in the writings of the British political officer for the Erbil region, Hay, who came to Erbil nine years after Soane in 1918. Hay defined the course of the Bastora stream, 41 kilometres northeast of the city of Erbil, as the border of Kurdistan: "Bastura Chai marks the southern western border of the Rawanduz district, and according to the people of Erbil it is the boundary between Iraq and Kurdistan" (Hay 1921: 17-21).

After World War I, the region was stabilised and new countries were established in the region. The topic of discussing Kurdistan and its borders had almost completely disappeared by then, due to the consolidation of the international trend to respect the borders of both incumbent and newly established states. In addition, nationalist sentiments in the region increased.

As for Kurdish nationalist feelings, these were still in their early stages. With the development of Kurdish nationalism and the beginning of the armed Kurdish movement, the international media and research centres, particularly western ones, focused increasingly on the Kurdish armed movement, its repercussions and violations of human rights of the Kurds.

The following factors played an important role in the Kurdish parties taking control of all of northern Iraq in 2003, and they began to claim ownership of the entire region:



- The collapse of the Iraqi state after the fall of the Ba'ath regime;
- The lack of clear borders for what is called Kurdistan;
- Expanding the borders of the so-called Kurdistan and increasing the number of the Kurdish population in most Western sources;
- The massive publications in Western literature on the Kurdish issue, which increased Western sympathy for the Kurds, which ensured massive support for the Kurds;
- The significant underestimation of the population and minority areas in northern Iraq in the misleading statistics of successive Iraqi national governments.

The Kurdish authorities expanded the borders of the Kurdish region (Kurdistan) in Iraq to include large areas of Iraqi lands, and placed these within the borders of Kurdistan according to the Constitution of the autonomous and self-styled Kurdish region.

### Conclusion

The arguably excessive sympathy of the West for the Kurdish case in Iraq is clearly reflected in their policies and hence in their financial, political and logistical support for the Kurds, ignoring other Iraqi minorities and violations of their rights by the Kurdish authorities and the Peshmerga militias.

Countless Western books, research papers and reports have been published on the Kurdish issue often supporting the Kurdish causes and claims. In many of these publications, the Kurdish regions have been expanded and their populations overblown at the expense of the other Iraqi ethnicities, especially at the expense of the Turkmen of Iraq.



Many of the historical regions of the Iraqi minorities have been incorrectly recorded in these publications as historical Kurdish regions, despite the relatively recent Kurdish presence in them.

Gross violations of the human rights of Iraqi Turkmen and other Iraqi minorities by the Kurdish authorities and the Peshmerga after the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003 were not recorded (SOITM Foundation 2009 & 2017; Iraq Turkmen Doctors Association 2015). Even the Western publications on human rights abuses of non-Kurdish Iraqi minorities by the Ba'ath regime are very limited. On the other hand, there are countless Western studies and reports on human rights violations against the Kurds, as well as on their politics, struggle and history.

It is clear from the foregoing analysis that the borders of the so-called 'Kurdistan' have been used and continue to be used arbitrarily, and they have been continuously inflated. Its inhabitants have always been made up of different ethnicities. Many of the ethnic groups that lived there before the coming of the Kurds, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, either became Kurds or emigrated.

Today, there are two definitions of Kurdistan in Iraq, the official definition according to the Iraqi Constitution, which consists of the three provinces: Erbil, Sulaymaniya and Duhok; and the definition of the Kurdish parliament or the Kurdish Constitution, which adds many regions from several other Iraqi provinces to the official Kurdistan.

Both definitions, especially that of the Kurdish Constitution, include many cities with a Turkmen majority, and others that had a Turkmen majority until the recent past. For example, Kirkuk, Tuz Khurmatu, Qara



Tepe, Qizil Rabat (Saadiya) Khanaqin, Altun Kopru, Mandali and Tal Afar. As for the city of Erbil, which has recently become the capital of Kurdistan region and is considered by many sources as a historical Kurdish city, this article explains its Turkmen character until the recent past and how it was Kurdified. As for the city of Tuz Khurmatu, the overwhelming majority are still Turkmen.

The fact that the province of Kerkuk contains large oil reserves and that it is a huge economic centre, which is what concerns the Iraqi state, and that the Kurdish parties and intellectuals consider it the Jerusalem of the Kurds and are constantly trying to possess it, has led to serious conflicts and violent opposition from the Iraqi state and neighbouring countries.

While the Kurdish parties and the Peshmerga control many Turkmen regions after the Gulf War in 1990 and the war to overthrow the Ba'ath regime in 2003, their claim of ownership of these lands, which many Western sources incorrectly described as Kurdish regions, do not receive any significant opposition even from the Iraqi state.

The factors that blurred and continue to obscure the facts about Iraqi minorities, especially the Turkmen in terms of their population and regions, explain the reliance of the international media and Western researchers on:

- The early Iraqi statistics and the estimates of the British Mandate during the negotiations of the Mosul problem, which dwarfed the number of Turkmen in Iraq to a large extent;
- The politicised and fake Iraqi official statistics on minorities, especially the Turkmen;



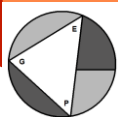
- The Kurdish sources—Kurdish authorities, officials, Peshmerga and Kurdish writers—who display ferocious ambitions to contain almost all of northern Iraq, which includes almost all of Iraq's minority areas.

Note that most of the information about the Turkmen in the Western press and research centres is taken from Kurdish sources.

Take into consideration the following:

- Most of the regions of the Iraqi minorities are located in north of Iraq;
- The Kurds, along with their politicians and intellectuals, consider the majority of the regions of the Iraqi minorities, especially the regions of the Turkmen, historically Kurdish;
- The entire north of Iraq fell under the control of the Kurdish parties and the Kurdish Peshmerga, who ruled it alone for more than ten years. Consequently, the administration was Kurdified to a very large degree, and large numbers of Kurdish families settled in these regions, which far exceeds the number of the Kurds displaced from their regions by the Ba'ath regime;
- The instability of security and the spread of terrorism after the fall of the Ba'ath regime necessitated the escort of the Kurdish authorities and the Peshmerga to Western journalists and researchers, who in turn provided the Westerners with misleading information about the geography and demography of the region;
- A large number of Western studies estimated a fictitious number of victims of the Anfal operations, for example, 50, 100, 150 or 200 thousand victims, and all these studies received facilities from the Kurdish parties and officials. They relied on members of Kurdish parties, Kurdish officials, and Kurdish civil society organisations to gather information and gather so-called informants, witnesses, and victims' families.





Everything was Kurdish except for the studies by writers who were Westerners.

Even after the Kurdish parties began to play a major role in the Iraqi administration after the fall of the Ba'ath regime, no concrete physical evidence was found for this huge number of deaths. At any rate it would be very difficult to kill such a number of people and even more difficult to hide their bodies.

*Sheth Jerjis is Chairperson of the Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation (Stichting Onderzoekscentrum Iraaks Turkmeense Mensenrechten (SOITM) in Dutch) based in Nijmegen, the Netherlands.*  
[s.jerjis@kpnmail.nl](mailto:s.jerjis@kpnmail.nl) [soitm@turkmen.nl](mailto:soitm@turkmen.nl)

### References—Bibliography

Aga Kasap, S. (1999), *أربيل واربيللي* [Erbil and Erbilian]. Erbil: Publication of the Iraqi Turkmen Front: pp.17, 19.

Ainsworth, W. F. (1841), *An Account of a Visit to the Chaldeans, inhabiting Central Kurdistan*. The Journal of the Royal Geographic Society of London, p.21 endnote.

Al-Azzawi, A. (2005) *موسوعة العشائر العراقية* [Encyclopedia of Clans of Iraq]. Arab house of Encyclopedias vol. 4, 1st edition, p.123.

Al-Duri, Kh. J. (1970), *Society and Economy of Iraq under the Seljuqs (1055 - 1160)*. Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Science



of the University of Pennsylvania in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of doctor of philosophy: p.120.

Al-Haydari, A. A. (2011), *عرض المخططات السياسية لتطوير مدينة أربيل لفترة ١٢٣٣ - ٢٠٠٥* [Presentation of the basic plans for the development of the city of Erbil 1233-2005]. Al-Hiwar al-Mutamaddin website, 11 December 2011.

Al-Tabari (1989), *The History of al-Tabari*. New York: State University of New York Press, Vol.XIII: p.51 endnote.

Al-Zabit, Sh. S. (1960), *موجز تاريخ التركمان في العراق* [Brief history of the Turkmen in Iraq]. Baghdad: al-Maarf Press Baghdad: pp.66-72, 73-100.

Anderson, L. & Stansfield, G. (2009), *Crisis in Kirkuk: The ethno-politics and compromise*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania press: p.40.

Asimov, M. S. & Bosworth, C. E. (1998), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. UNESCO publishing, Paris: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Vol.4: p.154.

Avery, P. (1991), *The Cambridge History of Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol.7: p.98.

Bassem, W. (2016), *Iraq's Turkmens call for independent province*. Washington: Al-Monitor website, October 14; see [www.al-monitor.com](http://www.al-monitor.com).

Batatu, H. (1978), *The old social classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press: pp.913, 45.

Beihammer, A. D. (2017), *Byzantium and the emergence Muslim Turkish Anatolia Ca. 1014-1130*. London & New York: Routledge: pp.62-68.



Bel, R. J. (1978), *Traveler's account as a source for the study of religion in Safavid Iran*. Thesis submitted to the faculty of Oriental studies University of Arizona: p.47.

Biggs, R. D. (1983), *Discoveries from Kurdish looms*. Chicago: Mary & Leigh Block Gallery, Northwestern University: p.40.

Buckingham, J. S. (1827), *Travels in Mesopotamia*. London: Henry Colburn: pp.325, 323-356, 348-349.

\_\_\_\_\_ (1971), *Travels in Assyria, Media and Persia*. London: Henry Colburn, 1829; reprinted, Farnborough England: Gregg International Publisher: pp.1-18.

Campanile, G. (1818), *History of the Kurdistan Region and the Religious Sects Existing There*. Napoli: Strada Tribunale, Naples: Vol.IV, pp.iii, iv, 42-55.

Coon, C. S. (1956), *Caravan – the story of Middle East*. New York: Henry Holt and Company: p.211.

De Nicola, B. & Melville, C. (2016), *The Mongols: Middle East continuity and transformation in Ilkanid Iran*. Leiden: Brill: p.296 endnote.

Della Valle, P. (1662), *Les fameux voyages de Pietro della Valle, gentilhomme romain, surnommé l'Illustre voyageur*. Paris: Chez Gervais Clouzler: p.6.

Dizayee, R. (2010), *Groundwater Degradation and Sustainability of the Erbil Basin, Erbil, Kurdistan Region, Iraq*. Erbil: Bachelor of Science, Salahaddin University: p.20.



Dundar, F. (2012), *Statisquo, British Use of Statistics in the Iraqi Kurdish Question (1919–1932)*. Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Crown Paper 7, July 2012, pp.37-44.

Dziadosz, A. (2017), 'Every nation needs a capital: How Erbil turned itself Kurdish'. *The Guardian*, 11 October 2017.

Eagleton, W. (1988), *An introduction to Kurdish rugs and other weavings*. New York: Scorpion: p.27.

Edmonds, C. J. (1950), *Kurds, Turks and Arabs*. London: Oxford University Press: pp.267, 25-26, 265-266, 439, 69, 39-40, 52-62, 141-142.

El-Azhari, T. (2016), *Zengi and the Muslim Response to the Crusades: The politics of jihad*. London & New York: Routledge: p.50.

Encyclopedia Britannica (1992), *Iraq from 1055 to 1534*. Vol.21, Heritage edition: pp.993-994, 980-983, 985.

EOĞLU, C, BABUÇOĞLU, M, & ÖZDİL, O. (2012), *Mosul in the Ottoman Vilâyet Salnâmes*. (Translated by İLDAN, Ümit). 5th ed. Ankara: ORSAM: p.46.

Fieldhouse, D. K. (2001), *Kurds, Arabs and Britons*. London: I. B. Tauris: pp.107, 87.

Fraser, J. B. (1840), *Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, &c. including an account of parts of those countries hitherto unvisited by Europeans with sketches of the character and manners of the Koordish and Arab tribes*, vol. 1. London: Richard Bentley: pp.149-150, 194-195.



\_\_\_\_\_ (1842), *Mesopotamia and Assyria: from the earliest ages to the present time*. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd: pp.149-150, 238.

Galetti, M. (2006), *Kurdistan and Its Christians*. World Congress of Kurdish Studies. A research presented to a conference organised in Erbil, between 6-9 September 2006, by the Kurdish Institute of Paris in partnership with Salaha al-Din University and with the support of the Kurdistan Regional Government and of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2018), *Traces of the Kurds and Kurdistan in Italy and Rome*. Istanbul: Institut français d'études anatoliennes: p.49.

Garzoni, M. (1787), *Grammatica e vocabolario della lingua Kurds*. Roma: Nella Stamperia della sacra congregazione di propaganda Fida: pp.3-5.

Gibson, M. (1981), *Uch Tepe I*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute – University of Chicago: pp.16-17.

Gibson, M & Biggs, R. D. (1987), *The Organization of power: aspects of bureaucracy in the ancient Near East*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: p.28.

Hassan, M. (2018), *معوقات التعداد السكاني وانعكاساته السلبية على مستقبل التنمية في العراق*. [Obstacles of the population census and its negative effects on the future of development in Iraq]. Baghdad: Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies, Baghdad: p.6.

Hay, W. R. (1921), *Two Years in Kurdistan 1918 – 1920*. London: William Clowes and Sons, Limited: pp.27, 82-83, 77, 165, 17-21.



Holt, P. M. (1970), *The Cambridge History of Islam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol.1: p.338.

Howell, T. (1789), *A Journal of the Passage from India*. London: C. Forster: pp.68-69.

HRW (2003), *Iraq: Forcible expulsion of ethnic minorities*. Human Rights Watch, Vol.15 No.3 (E), March 2003: p.13.

ICG (2008), *Turkey and Iraqi Kurds: conflicts or cooperation?* International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No.81. 13 November 2008: p.16.

Intelligence Bureau (1917), *Department of Information, Report on the Pan-Turanian movement*. No.2, October 1917: p.21.

Iraq Turkmen Doctors Association (2015), *The current human rights situation for Iraqi Turkmen 2014-2015*. A report presented to the Danish ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2015.

Isa, R. (1922), *مختصر جغرافية العراق* [Brief geography of Iraq (Arabic)]. Baghdad: Syrio-Catholic press house: pp.272-282.

Jackson, J. (1799), *A Journey from India toward England in 1797: A Common Road*. London: G. Woodfall: pp.118-126.

Jarman, R. L. (1992), *Iraq Administration reports 1914-1932*. Cambridge: Cambridge archive edition: p.44.

Jerjis, S. (2020), 'The Emergence and Collapse of the Iraqi Turkmen Political System under the Domination of Turkey'. *Forum of EthnoGeoPolitics* Vol.8 No.2, Winter 2020: p.316.



Keppel, G. (1827), *Personal Narrative of Travels in Babylonia, Assyria, Media, and Scythia*. London: H. Colburn, Vol.I: pp.267-291.

Kinneir, J. M. (1813), *A Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*. London printed for John Murray, Albemarle-street: pp.300-301.

Knights, M. (2004), *Operation Iraqi Freedom and the New Iraq*. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: p.262.

Lalani, M. (2010), *Still Targeted: Continued Persecution of Iraq's Minorities*. Minority Rights Group International: p.25.

Le Strange, G. (1930), *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: pp.58, 192.

League of Nations (1924), *Question of the Frontier between turkey and Iraq*. Report submitted to the Council on 30th September 1924: pp.25-26, 8, 32, 33, 77, 38, 144, 45.

Lebon, J. H. G. (1953), 'Population Distribution and the Agricultural Regions of Iraq'. *The geographical review* Vol.2, April 1953: p.223.

Longrigg, S. H. (1953), *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*. London: Oxford University Press: pp.131, 136, 283.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2002), *Four centuries of Modern Iraq*. Lebanon: Garnet publishing: pp.45, 96, 10-11, 6.

Marr, P. (1985), *The Modern History of Iraq*. London: Westview Press: p.9.



Mati, E. & De Boer, H. (2010), 'Ethno-botany and Trade of Medicinal Plants in the Qaysari Market, Erbil, Kurdish Autonomous Region, Iraq'. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* Vol.133 No.2: pp.490-510.

McDowall D. (1996), *A Modern History of the Kurds*. London: I. B. Tauris: pp.9, 118, 160.

Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (2015), *Iraq, Report on data collection survey on water sector in southern Iraq*. NJS consultants co., LTD, March 2015: pp.2-14.

Minorsky, V. (1957), 'Mongol Place-Names in Mukri Kurdistan' *Mongolica*, 4 BSOAS, Vol.19 No.1: p.73.

Moll, Herman (1736), *Turkey in Asia or Asia Minor in 1736* [map]. London: Thos. Bowles & John Bowles.

Moosa, M. (1988), *Extremist Shiites: The Gulat Sects*. New York: Syracuse University Press: pp.1-185.

Niebuhr, C. (1778), *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern*. Kopenhagen: Printed by Nicolaus Möller: pp.332-339, 419.

\_\_\_\_\_. (1776), *Reizen naar Arabië en andere omliggende landen*. J. S. Baalde, Volume 2: p.326.

O'Balance, E. (1973), *The Kurdish Revolt: 1961-1970*. London: Faber & Faber Limited: p.33.





Özoğlu, H. (2004), *Kurdish notables and the Ottoman state*. New York: State University New York Press: pp.26, 29, 34, 43-68.

Paksoy, H. B. (1992), *Central Asian Monuments*. Istanbul: ISIS Press: pp.56-57.

Papakitsos, E & Kenanidis, I (2013), 'Yet Another Suggestion about the Origins of the Sumerian Language'. *International Journal of Linguistics*. Vol.5 No.5: pp.30-44.

Polo, M. (1855), *The Travels of Marco Polo*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers: p.185.

Posch, W. (2005), *Looking into Iraq*. Institute for Security Studies, European Union: p.51.

Ray, J. (1738), *A collection of curious travels & voyages: in two tomes: the first containing Dr. Leonhart Rauwolff's Itinerary into the Eastern countries, as Syria, Palestine, or the Holy Land, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Chaldea, &c.* Translated from the Original High Dutch, by Nicholas Staphorst, by the rev. John Ray, Vol. II, London: Printed for 7. Walthoe, 7. Knapton, D. Midwinter [etc.]: pp.164-165, 161-163, 294.

Rich, C. J. (1972), *Narrative of a residence in Kurdistan*. Farnborough England: Gregg International, Vol.I : pp.296, 45-47, 272; Vol. II, pp.15-19, 4-9.

Rousseau, J. B. L. (1809), *Description du Pachalik de Bagdad*. Paris: Libraires, rue de Lille: p.102.



Saatci, S. (1996), *Tarihi Gelişme içinde: Irak'ta Türk Varlığı* (Turkish) [In the historical development: Turkish presence in Iraq]. Istanbul: Istanbul research Foundation: pp.66-72.

Salman, B. E. (2020), 'Religions and nationalities in Iraq from 1914 to 1958'. *Palarch's Journal of archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology* Vol.17 No.7: p.5033.

Samanci, A. (1999), *التاريخ السياسي لتركمان العراق* [Political History of the Iraqi Turkmen], Al-Saki Print House, Beirut 1999, first edition: pp.37-59.

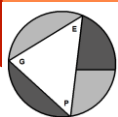
Soane, E. B. (2013), *To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise*. London: Weşanxaneya Azad (1912 original edition: London, John Murray): p.109.

SOITM Foundation (2009), *The most difficult time for the non-Kurdish components in the north of Iraq: Is it the disputed areas or seized areas?* A report of the Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation, 21 June, 2009; [www.turkmen.nl/1A\\_soitm/Rep.22-H2509.pdf](http://www.turkmen.nl/1A_soitm/Rep.22-H2509.pdf).

\_\_\_\_\_ (2017), *At the mercy of the Kurdish parties Turkmen are subjected to constant terror*. A Press Release of SOITM Foundation, 29 April 2017; [www.turkmen.nl/1A\\_soitm/PR.4-D2917e.pdf](http://www.turkmen.nl/1A_soitm/PR.4-D2917e.pdf).

Stanley, L-P. (1894), *The Mohammedan dynasties: chronological and genealogical tables with historical introductions*. Westminster, A. Constable & Co.: p.165.

Suleiman, N. A. (2018), *Iraq's 2003 Official Census by Ministries of Trade and Planning for the Food Coupon Distribution for the UN Oil-for-Food Program*. Panarabismo e identidades religiosas y étnicas (State Workers Association): p.198.



UNESCO, (1998), *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, Vol.4: p.148.

UNDP (2014), *Iraq Human Development Report 2014: Iraqi Youth Challenges and Opportunities*. Ministry of Planning And Bayt al Hikma Iraq: p.140.

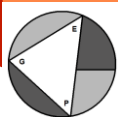
UK Naval Intelligence Division (1944), *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*. Oxford: Naval Intelligence Division – Geographical Handbook Series, 1944. See for Map 5 in the Appendix: <http://pubs.sciepub.com/ajcea/5/6/1/figure/2>.

Van Bruinessen, M. (1992), *Agha, shaikh, and state*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd: pp.216, 93, 216.

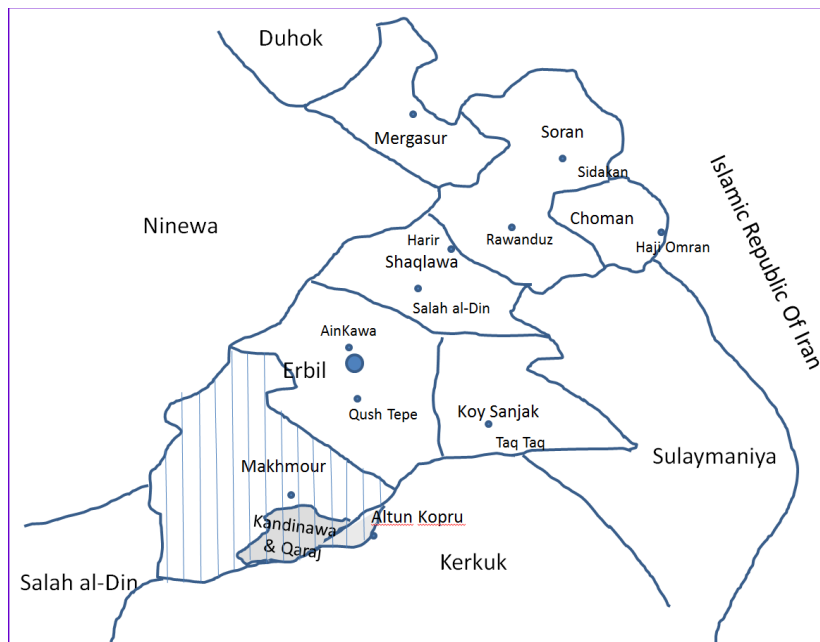


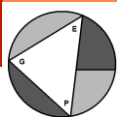
**Map 1 Sketch of Erbil city 2002 (SOITM Foundation)**





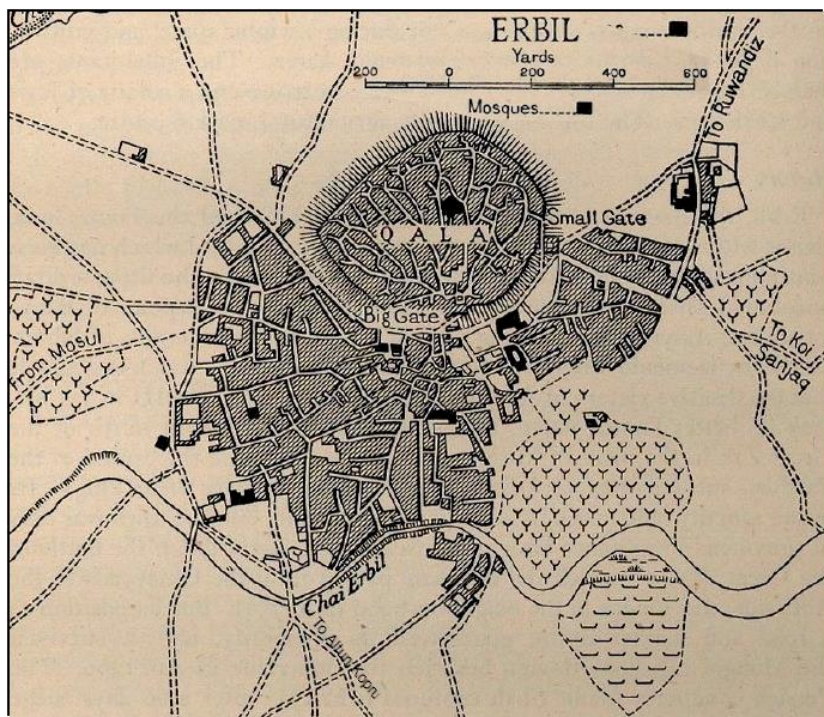
**Map 2 The administrative districts of Erbil province**





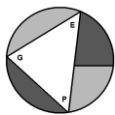
Map 3 Sketch of Erbil city around 1920

Source: *Iraq and the Persian Gulf* UK Naval Intelligence Division, 1944



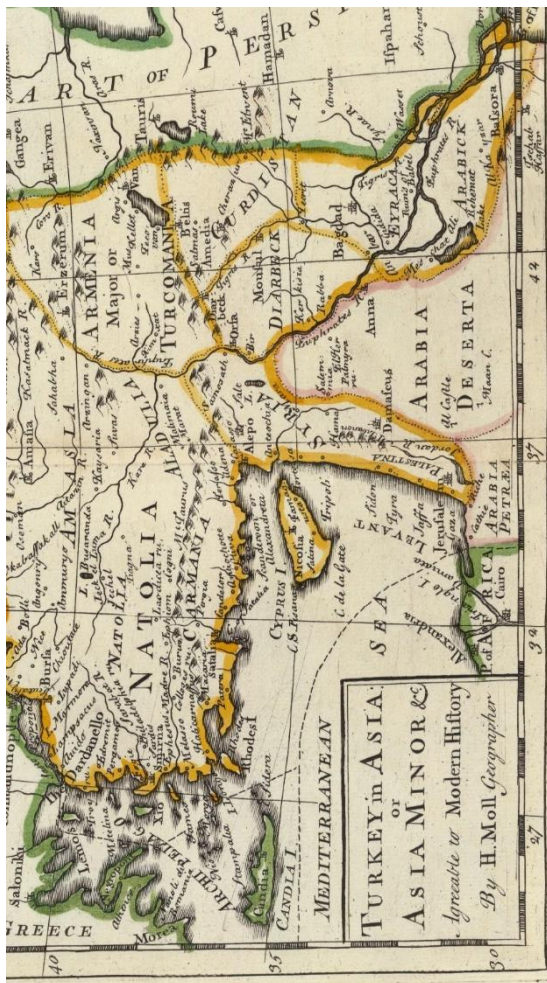




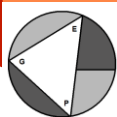


## Map 5 Turkey in Asia or Asia Minor in 1736

Source: by Herman Moll, London: Thos. Bowles & John Bowles





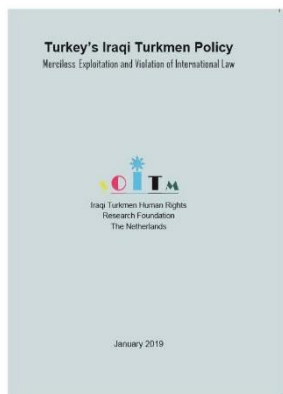


(Advertisement)

## Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy

### *Merciless Exploitation and Violation of International Law*

By Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation (SOITM Foundation)



Publisher: SOITM Foundation  
Published: January 2019  
Language: English  
Format: 135 x 195 mm  
Edition: First  
Extent: 200 pages  
ISBN: 978-90-9031494-5  
Imprint: Benda printing  
Price: 40 Euro

xxiii + 186 pp. a map

Please note that the price of shipping may vary depending on your country of residence

Requested from SOITM Foundation  
WhatsApp/Viber 0031 (0)6 16 26 25 86  
Email: [soitm@turkmen.nl](mailto:soitm@turkmen.nl)

### About "Turkey's Iraqi Turkmen Policy"

The Turkmen in Iraq are of ethnic Turkic communities living in several countries neighboring Turkey.

The animosity and the hatred that had developed towards the Ottomans in the later decades of the Empire reflected onto those Turkic origin communities in the newly created countries after the Ottomans dismembered, which all were ruled by non-Turkish governments. The Turkic communities in the Balkans were exposed to massacres, in Greece they are still deprived of their ethnic rights, and in the Arabic countries, they are marginalized and exposed to serious assimilation policies, as in the cases of the Iraqi and Syrian Turkmen.

These suppressed communities had no other choice than to consider Turkey as their only rescuer and subjugate themselves to Turkey. At the same time, this has increased the animosity against them in their new countries and removed the possibility of getting help from any other national, regional or international powers.

On the other side, Turkey had neither ability nor intention to help these Turkic communities, in contrary, Turkey remain inattentive to their sufferings, even misused these communities benefiting from their blind obedience.

This book presents the history of 3 decades of the Turkish policy towards the Turkmen of Iraq, which can be considered a vivid view of the Turkish relation with Turkic communities in the neighboring countries.