

Research Article

The issue of ethnic kurdish people in the middle east: history of origin and evolution

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the problem of the Kurds in ensuring regional stability and security in the Middle East, the history of this problem in comparison with the history of the countries of the region in the 15-19 centuries. The analysis of the facts presented in the historical literature about the Kurds is carried out. The attitude of the Middle East countries to these issues, the factor of external power in this matter, the relationship of the problem with other confessional problems in the region are also being studied.

Keywords: Kurds, Kurdish issue, Tribalism, Ashirat, Regional Empires, Shafi, Kurdistan, Mosul, Sykes-Picot Treaty, Lausanne Treaty.

INTRODUCTION

Although the history of the Kurds goes back a long way, there are different approaches and opinions about their origin. In fact, this is a natural state of affairs, and there are differences of opinion about the history of all nations. The problem is not in the diversity of views on the origins of nations, but in their interpretation of

historical events based on the political interests of a nation or state. The main problem and difficulty in social research is also that scholars in this field act independently (without pursuing political goals) in research. Some scientists also point out that this is impossible.



Fig.1: Geographical location of the Kurds

METHODS OF RESEARCH

In this work, scientific methods and approaches that used in the study of the history of different regions were used. In some cases, ethnographic methods were used that were the subject of research, taking into account the cultural and ethnic characteristics of the Kurds. The ethnogenesis of peoples and nations in the Middle East and adjacent regions is also studied through the method of historical-comparative analysis of the participation of the Kurds in socio-political processes and the formation of states in

the region. In particular, the role of the Kurds in the recent history of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria and the emergence of the Kurdish problem in the current political situation in the region have been studied.

MAIN PART

Although there is no single view on the historical location of the Kurds, several sources mention the central parts of the Zagros Mountains as their historical homeland. The Kurds have lived in these areas since the 6th century BC, says

researcher Gunter. Prior to the spread of Islam in the 7th century, the Kurds, who remained under the rule of several empires such as Persia, Rome, and Byzantium, maintained a divided cultural structure throughout history, relying on tribalism. In the following periods, the Arab Khilafah, the Seljuks, the Khorezmshahs, the Mongols, the Timurids, the Ottomans from 1510 to the First World War, and the Safavids in Iran, the Kurds living under the Kojar state, were a united Kurdish state that never ruled the Kurdish nation. The Russian orientalist MS Lazarev writes about the political conditions for the ethnic unification of the Kurdish nation in its historical development (mainly formed at the end of the Sassanid period, around the 6th century BC) and its transformation into a separate group of Kurds. occurred under the condition of residence. The historical homeland of the Kurds and the lands where most of them lived permanently (Kurdistan) has always been an ethno-territorial issue, not an ethno-political one. The state that ensured the dominance of the Kurdish ethnic group - Kurdistan - never existed.

Nevertheless, the Kurds had tribal states or emirates governed on the basis of strong tribalism in the form of tribalism. These emirates, writes Michael Eppel, ruled the tribes by taking control of the less powerful tribes, as well as by powerful Kurdish tribal dynasties. The first dynasties of the Kurdish tribes were the Hasanwahids (Hasanwiya) (959-1095), the Banu Annazids (990-1116), the Shaddadids (951-1075), and the Banu Marwans (948-1083).

A characteristic feature of the Kurds is tribalism, and the reason why the Kurds have not been able to build a single strong state in history has also been that they live in a tribal view based on tribalism. The formation of Kurdish political rule in this form has reached such a level that even another tribe of their own people seems more dangerous and perilous than an external enemy. Because, in them the continuation of the tribal dynasty was paramount.

Ziya Gokalp, a sociologist who is well acquainted with Kurdish society, said: "In all primitive societies there is no concept of individual or collective law. The right belongs only to the tribe. There is enmity between his uncle and his nephew for the presidency of the tribe. The struggle for the presidency usually lasts a long time. The defeated side leaves the tribe and seeks refuge from another tribe. "The Kurds developed a tribal ideology, not a homeland ideology."

The chairman of the Kurdish tribe, Idris-i Bitlis, wrote a letter of invitation to the Ottoman sultan, Yovuz Sultan Selim: "The Kurds live as separate tribes and tribes. We are in a state of alliance

only when we know Allah and are the ummah of Muhammad. In other respects it is impossible for us to be close to each other. This is how the Sunnah has been applied to us."

This division of the Kurds, on the one hand, served to prevent their assimilation into other peoples and nations, and to preserve their language, traditions and customs throughout history. On the other hand, their inability to unite did not allow them to build a single state. Moreover, tribalism has been very useful in being a "puppet" under the rulers of other nations, making them permanent vassals by fighting each other. The famous historian Arnold Toynbee wrote in 1934: "The worst enemy of the Kurds is tribal and feudal strife, which allows Iraq to pursue a policy of 'divide and rule' between the Turkish and Persian governments."

Nevertheless, the Kurds have historically been the constant focus of politically, culturally, and strategically large states. In particular, the Kurds were largely on the side of the Turks in the wars between the Ottoman Turks and the Safavid Empire of Iran. Since the majority of the Kurds were Sunni Muslims, the Shia supported the Ottomans against the Iranians. These wars ended mainly with the victory of the Ottoman Turks. The security of the eastern borders of the Ottoman Turks has always been stable thanks to the Kurds. It should also be noted that as a result of the wars between the Ottomans and the Persians, the increase in the population of Eastern Anatolia changed in favor of the Kurds. The reason is that in these wars, the Persians supported the Turkmen tribes, who were Shiites, and the Ottoman Turks helped the Kurdish tribes, who were Shafis. As a result, most Kurdish Shafis under Iranian rule migrated to Eastern Anatolia, while a minority of Turkmen Shiites migrated from the Ottoman Empire to Iran. Thus, although "Turkification" began in the eastern part of Anatolia, after these wars the population of Eastern Anatolia increased mainly through the Kurds.

Saint Chelebi, who lived in the 17th century and is best known for his Travelogue, left important information about Kurdish lands. He used the term "Diyar-i Kurdistan" to refer to the region where the Kurds live, calling it "a great country." "There are people who speak Kurdish in seventy places, from Erzurum to Van, from Hakkari to Jizra, Imadiya, Mosul, Shehrizar, Harir, Erdelan, Baghdad, Derne, Derteng and Basra," he said. It would be very convenient for the Ajam people to invade the Ottoman land if there were no strong barrier between the 6,000 Kurdish tribes and tribes in these high mountains between the Arabs of Iraq and the Ottoman Turks," Saint Chelebi wrote. He also expressed the Kurdish resistance to

Ajam by saying, "There are fifty armed Shafi'i ummah-i Muhammad in this region." "And if it were not for the great wall of Kurdistan between Ali Usman and Ajam, Ali Usman would not have had peace. Ajam hasm-i kavi, shejiu fetadir ... "means that Iran, which is facing the Ottomans, is a dangerous enemy. For this reason, the Ottomans focus on the Kurds and the lands of Kurdistan. From the point of view of the stability of the Ottoman state, he admits that "in this sense, the Ottomans are seen as the patrons of the Sunni world, and Kurdistan is a very strong wall among the Safavids, the Shiite patrons against it."

In general, from 1510 until the First World War, the Kurdistan region was the center of conflict between the Turks and the Persians. In 1638, a year after the Ottoman Turk Murad IV's complete conquest of Baghdad, the boundaries of the Turkish-Iranian treaty were clearly defined. Although the agreement was in place until World War I, the Kurdistan Region remained a hotbed of conflict between the two countries and sometimes escalated into military action. In particular, there were several attempts by the Ottomans to occupy the Kurdish regions during the reign of Nadir Shah in Iran, but they were unable to fully capture Baghdad, the land of the Kurds, which had previously belonged to the Persians. Nevertheless, Nadirshah managed to seize Tbilisi from the Ottomans.

In addition, during the Zand and Kojar dynasties in Iran, there were several military clashes with the Ottomans for Baghdad and the Kurdish regions. However, the treaty was finally signed in 1639. The border line under this 1639 agreement is still in force between Turkey-Iran and Iraq-Iran. Since the Battle of Chaldiran on August 23, 1514, much of the land inhabited by the Kurds has been part of the Ottoman Turkic state. Some areas inhabited by Kurds, such as Kermanshah and Urmia, remained part of Iran. By the 1820s, as the Ottoman Turks began to weaken, Kurdish

uprisings took place in several areas. We have already mentioned the Kurdish uprisings of this period. However, with the defeat of the Ottoman Turks to the Egyptians in Nizip (near Gaziantep) in 1839, the Kurds began a major uprising led by Nurullah Bey in Hakkari and Bedirkhan in Jizre (near Shirnak). These revolts are divided according to their suppression only in 1847.

In the 1850s, the Middle East region became the largest playing field in the world political games of the Russian, British, and French colonial powers. While the Russians helped the Kurds against the Ottoman Turks in order to take control of the Straits of Istanbul and the Dardanelles, the British and French supported various Arab communities.

In 1804-1805, the Russians' contacts with the Kurds began to bear fruit in a short time. The influence of the Turkish-Russian wars of 1828-29, 1853-58 and 1877-78 reached as far as Kurdistan. In 1829, the Russians used a Kurdish regiment in the war. As the Christians left their country, the Kurds began to spread north and west. In the Crimean War, the Russians formed two Kurdish regiments. After the war of 1878, the Hakkari Kurds in Bahdinan and Bokhtan revolted. In 1880, the Kurds occupied the Urmia, Savuch Bulak, Miyandoab, and Maragha regions of Iran and made history by carrying out horrific raids on Tabriz. In 1905, the Ottomans took advantage of the Russian failure in the Far East (the Russo-Japanese War) to invade the Kurds in Urmia, Savuch Bulak.

In short, the colonial policy of the imperialist states was the main reason for the development of Kurdish-Turkish, Kurdish-Armenian, Arab-Turkish, Arab-Kurdish and Armenian-Turkish and other similar ethnic and religious conflicts. This happened not only in the Ottoman Turkic state, but also in many other states and regions such as Iran and India. It is very difficult to say that such a policy is over today.

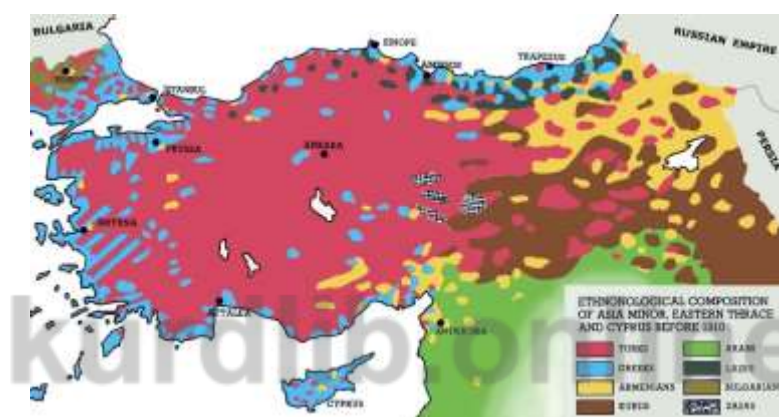


Fig.2. Map of the ethnic composition of the Ottoman Turkic state

(Pre-1910 situation)

source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Ottoman_Empire

It is known that with the defeat of Turkish troops in the wars in Syria and Mesopotamia in 1918, it became clear that the map of the Middle East would be redrawn. The first appearances of the new frontiers took place before the end of the war with Hussein-McMahon correspondence on the future of the Ottoman Arab lands. Later, in the autumn of 1917, the Bolsheviks, who had seized power in Russia through revolutions, revealed the details of the Sykes-Picot Treaty (May 1916), which was proposed to take control of much of Anatolia from Turkey. According to him, the Russian emperor was to receive the Straits of Istanbul (Bosphorus) and the eastern provinces of the Ottomans, the Eastern Black Sea region, Italy and Izmir and the surrounding lands as a reward for their alliance. The Bolsheviks wanted nothing more from such imperialist schemes than to make this agreement public. In this case, the Anglo-French allies immediately began to fill the gap created by the dissolution of Russia, and the Kazakh regions, the Caucasus, Armenia, Georgia, Kurdistan were given to Britain as "zones of influence." The United States, led by President Wilson, who has not been involved in these processes, is beginning to openly advocate that Armenians, like Jews, should have their own state. In addition, President Wilson advocated the idea of giving other nations independence (self-determination) or autonomy. However, the fate of the Kurds remained unclear. Thus, as the Turks sought to minimize the loss of their lands, the Armenians hoped to gain their own state with the help of allied forces and the United States, and the Kurds were concerned about where and how to build a state or survive altogether.

Several Kurdish representatives who went to the Sykes-Piconi difference were concerned that they intended to divide them into several regions. Some were under the influence of the British, others were in the lands promised to the French, and still others to the Russians, but their fate remained uncertain. These lands ran along the Iranian border from Rania and Ravanduz to the north to Bitlis, Van and the Black Sea, and to the west to Erzincan. For the UK, the issue of Kurdistan was a secondary issue with a political goal aimed primarily at Greater Syria and Mesopotamia. Thus, according to the Sykes-Pico map, Britain initially paid no attention to Kurdistan. However, with its strategic location in Mesopotamia (Iraq), the fate of Kurdistan was an undeniably important issue.

In October 1918, British military commanders in Baghdad realized that Mosul was important for the political and economic future of Mesopotamia. First, large oil reserves were discovered in Mosul. It was located on an important road leading to Baghdad and Basra and was a region of socio-economic integration with Baghdad. Most of the wheat was also grown in this region. Second, the peace and security of Baghdad also depended on the stability of the mountainous and low-lying areas in northern Mesopotamia. For this reason, the region of Mosul, which came under French control under the Sykes-Picot agreement, was later taken over by the British, along with Kirkuk and Erbil, the areas around which were predominantly Turkmen. In one such process, historian Arnold Toynbee made the following suggestion to then-British Foreign Secretary Mark Sykes: And the same work should be done in Mesopotamia as it was done in British India in the North West Frontier Province (NW Frontier province). This was recently proposed by Sheriff Pasha. (Muhammad Sherif Pasha was one of the most respected Kurdish generals during the Ottoman period. He was a member of the Kurdish party, which was formed during the constitutional reforms in the Ottoman state (1907-08). Although loyal to the Sultan, he had liberal views and was a supporter of decentralized governance. He was exiled in 1909 and fled to Paris, where he took an active part in other Young Turks movements and took part in Ottoman affairs. With the outbreak of the war, Sheriff Pasha began to advance the Kurdish issue in an effective way by establishing close ties with the Allies) Such a Kurdistan includes not only the country south of the Lesser Zab, but also in the regions of Rovanduz, Hakkari and Bohtan, where the borders of Armenia can be drawn ... " The British are beginning to think seriously about this. Between 1919 and 1924, the biggest problem of the British was the tribulations of Sheikh Mahmud and Barzani, with whom they came to terms. As a result, from 1920 onwards, the Barzani tribe became the leading tribe in Iraq. At that time, the head of the tribe was Mulla Mustafa Barzani. However, he was not a man who could come to terms with a central government like Sheikh Mahmud. When the British formed a state called Iraq, they planned to establish an independent Kurdish organization, which would form a majority in its northern parts, and then with the Treaty of Sevres to form an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Anatolia uniting the Kurdish part of Iraq with Anatolia. These plans of the British did not

materialize. There were several reasons for this. First, the Treaty of Sevres (An agreement signed between the Ottoman government and the victorious Allies in Sevres, France, on August 10, 1920, provided for the settlement of Kurdistan's borders in Anatolia by an Anglo-French-Italian commission, and Article 64 provided for the establishment of an autonomous Kurdistan state in French Syria and British Mesopotamia. This agreement went down in history as the Treaty of Sevres) was not ratified by the Turkish Grand National Assembly. On the contrary, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk), he started the War of Salvation (Salvation) against the imperialist colonialists. Second, both the British and the French were more interested in building their own Iraqi and Syrian states than in a separate Kurdistan. Moreover, not only Turkish but also Arab leaders were opposed to the establishment of Kurdistan, in which case it was difficult for the British and French to take risks. On top of that, the Kamalists approached the Bolsheviks and in March 1921 reached a Treaty of Friendship. Meanwhile, the Kemalists are also stepping up serious separatist movements in British-controlled Anatolia by supporting the Kurds against anti-Arabs and anti-imperialists. As a result, the Kemalist army maintained its position in Ravanduz even though it was defeated. The Kemal army, led by Uzdemir, is on its way to Mosul. He is assisted by Barzani from the Kurdish tribes. The British are confused as the Kurds begin to support the Turks. Then the British brought back the Kurdish leader Sheikh Mahmud, who had once been exiled to India for a revolt, and appointed him governor of Sulaymaniyah. This appointment will come in handy for the British. Half of the Kurds who supported Uzdemir sided with Sheikh Mahmud, and Uzdemir was defeated in the war in April-May 1923 and was forced to leave Mosul altogether. Later, the British sent Sheikh Mahmud into exile again due to disagreements between the tribes. Instead, he brings the Barzani to power in Mosul. Thus, on July 24, 1923, a treaty was signed in Lausanne. If the Treaty of Sevres gave Kurdish and Armenians autonomous rights, the Treaty of Lausanne does not address the issue of Kurdish and Armenian autonomy at all. At the conference, the Turkish side will try to prove that the Kurds are mountain Turks. However, then-British Foreign Secretary Kerzon told Ismat Inonu, who headed the Turkish delegation, "All our information shows that the Kurds should be a separate nation with their own independent history, customs and traditions." However, in all countries in the region, the Kurdish language has been considered almost non-existent in official and public places, schools

and universities for decades. This is still the case in countries other than Iraq. Thus, while the Kurds lived for 400 years (1514-1924) as two states divided between the Ottomans and Iran, since 1924 they have lived in the region divided into four states, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria.

CONCLUSION

In this article, the following conclusions are drawn from the analysis of the history and evolution of ethnic Kurds and the Kurdish problem in the Middle East, and their impact on regional security:

First, the Kurds live in the form of a confederation of tribes (tribe / clan). Ashirat leaders play an important role in the socio-political life of the Kurds. Historically, the Kurds have not lost their tribal way of life. This served to keep them from assimilating to other peoples on the one hand, and to preserve their own language and customs. Second, the Kurds have never been able to unite. This situation has historically led to living as dependent on this or that state. In addition, the fact that the Kurds lived in mountainous areas also led to their geographical isolation and thus to the preservation of their language and tribal traditions, and the empires and states that established their rule did not interfere in the internal affairs of the peoples in the mountains (sometimes impossible).

Third, while there is much debate about who the Kurds are originally, the generally accepted view is that they are one of the peoples of Iran. Their language also belongs to the Iranian-Persian language family. The predominantly Sunni Kurds have played an important role in the Islamic world (for example, Salahuddin, the founder of the Ayyubids, who made a name for himself by winning the battle against the Crusaders for Jerusalem, is originally a Kurd).

Fourth, the Kurdish people, who have long lived side by side with different peoples, have also developed national ethnic movements of the Kurds as a result of the divisive policies of the imperialist states and the intensification of nationalist movements, and these movements continue to this day. While World War I gave many nations the right to independence or autonomy that determined their destiny, the Kurds were deprived of such a right and became the largest nation in the world without a state of their own. This situation today is becoming a support not only for the Kurds but also for the political goals of external forces.

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