

The Barbaric Attack on Assyrian and Mesopotamian History

By Fred Aprim

With the support of the United States, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) was established in northern Iraq in 1992. Subsequently, efforts ensued to construct the foundation for what could become a new Kurdish nation state. There are those, however, who are convinced that the US at this time at least is unlikely to sponsor a Kurdish state within Iraq that could boost similar aspirations by Kurds in Turkey. Thus Kurds in Iraq could expect some degree of autonomy from the Iraqi Central Government sufficient enough to enable the US to maintain a strategic presence in northern Iraq, watch over Iran and keep Turkey happy at the same time.

At any rate, this new Kurdish nation-state envisioned by the Kurdish leaders in Iraq needed a foundation to be built upon and one pillar to support such foundation is history. The construction of this history was necessary since the Kurds have a relatively brief history in Iraq (Mesopotamia) compared to that of the Assyrians. With a healthy treasury and a strong continuous aid from the US and other European countries, the KRG has allocated millions of dollars on rewriting the Kurdish history. It has contacted and paid politicians and historians around the world for this purpose. Luckily for the Kurds, the fabrication of their history began when there were no experts on Kurdish history, thus their claims set no boundaries.

The KRG did not only rely on the paid Kurdish and non-Kurdish writers, it went further by learning from Saddam Hussein's policies. KRG officials are never shy from making unfounded and outrageous historic claims as they see them fit and then allow those paid writers to justify such claims. If we look at Saddam Hussein's claims, we would see that he first claimed that he was a descendent of Mohammad. Then he turned around and claimed that King Nabuchednassar of Babylon was his ancestor. Kurdish officials have learned from such chauvinistic and brutal dictatorship as they too with insolence and sauciness claim that they are the descendents of the Medes, Hittites and other Indo-European races and then turn around and claim that the Sumerian, Akkadian and Assyrian kings were Kurdistanis as well. One does not understand, are the Kurds Indo-Europeans or Semites, because one could not be both. I guess some Kurdish writers and politicians think that the Kurds are unique like no other people on earth as one half of the Kurdish body is Indo-European, while the other half is Semitic.

The rewriting of the Kurdish history requires much manipulation, appropriation, imagination and great disguise. The examples of the barbaric attack on the history of Assyria and Mesopotamia by certain paid Kurdish writers and officials are plentiful. The Kurdish assault on Mesopotamian history is turning to become a major offensive as more and more appalling claims by those arrogant Kurdish writers and politicians turn on various sites or media outlets.

Allow me to list the following examples:

1. Dr. Farsat Mur'ai

Dr. Farsat Mur'ai, a Kurd, is the Head of the Kurdish Central Studies in the University of Dohuk, northern Iraq. The corruption of history by Dr. Farsat would make world's theologians and historians scratch their heads. Let me just point to one of the most outrageous claims made recently by this so-called history teacher. Dr. Farsat claims that the early fathers of Syriac literature and theology Mar Aprim the great, Mar Narsai and Bardisan were Kurdish Christians. There is not much that a person can say about such an outlandish claim.

On May 18, 2006, the al-Jazeera.net published an article by Dr. Farsat Mur'ai titled "The Historic Role of Kurds."

See link <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/67AB717C-E429-4D98-B083-FFB91E2CD2F5.frameless.htm>

In his article, Dr. Farsat speaks about the role of the Kurds in world's history and claims that the Kurds had a rather important role, because the world's first civilizations appeared on Kurdish lands. He adds that the ancient people of Iraq, including the Sumerians, Akkadians, and Assyrians were considered to be the second wave of mankind that spread after the resting of Utnapishtim's (Noah) Ark on one of the Kurdish mountains. He claims that this is recorded in the Akkadian and Assyrian ancient texts. Dr. Farsat continues later to claim that the third millennia B.C. historic records have saved the names of many gods that were worshipped by the people of northern Mesopotamia, the ancient people of Kurdistan, in addition to few myths or epics that had great influence on the development of civic awareness and mental structure for those nations and the surrounding nations as they began to have common feelings that framed civic, economic and political relationships. Dr. Farsat continues on and claims that other gods made the doctrine of the people of northern and eastern Mesopotamia or Subartu. These gods that originated from the Hindu-Aryan mythology, he claims, left their homes of southern Russia in the beginning of the second millennia B.C. and headed towards India, Iran, Anatolia and Subartu (Kurdistan).

I just wonder, where did Dr. Farsat see those claimed Assyrian and Akkadian ancient texts that refer to that certain Kurdish mountain? Did he see those texts in his dreams? The rest of the gibberish that he claims is nothing but a figment of his imagination and he is brilliant at mixing up Mesopotamia, Subartu and the illusive Kurdistan to confuse the simple readers.

2. Fadhil Mirani

During the early 1990s, Fadhil Mirani, Political Bureau Secretary of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Massoud Barazani, head of the Kurdish front in Dohuk at the time, repeatedly used racist methods to divide the Assyrians with methods similar to those of Saddam's Ba'ath regime. Foremost among their tactics were financing divisionists in northern Iraq to undermine the Assyrian history and making the Assyrians known as a group of separate religious denominations rather than a distinct ethnic group, thus questioning the historic rights of Assyrians in northern Iraq and rejecting the Assyrian rooted history in the region.

3. Mulla Bakhtiyar

On October 22, 2007, al-Malaf Press posted an interview with Mulla Bakhtiyar, In Charge of Foreign Relations Bureau in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) party under Jalal Talabani.

Visit link <http://almalafpress.net/?d=143&id=44161>

Mr. Bakhtiyar stated that there were investigations and international historic studies during the previous League of Nations regarding Kirkuk, Sulaimaniya, Dohuk, Arbil and Mosul that prove that those regions are Kurdistan regions and that those regions were/are inhabited by the indigenous Kurdish people. Mr. Bakhtiyar answered a question regarding the rights of the Turkoman for example to establish a region for themselves in northern Iraq and he stated: "...It is known that nations (peoples) have the legal right to establish their own states or regions if they had historic and geographical lands; however, the Turkomen and ChaldoAshur [referring to Assyrians] are residing in Kurdistan and they have full citizenship rights in it, but they, i.e., Turkomen and Assyrians, do not own/have any Turkomeni or ChaldoAshuri [Assyrian] lands in Kurdistan and/or in Iraq."

This writer published a detailed article about Mr. Bakhtiyar's statement as a guest editorial for AINA.

Visit link <http://www.aina.org/guesteds/20071103124836.pdf>

Mr. Bakhtiyar must be blind since he fails to recognize all the Assyrian archaeological findings in northern Iraq and in world's museums, when we know for a fact that there is not a single ancient Kurdish monument, stele, artifact, tablet, etc., about people known as Kurds in northern Iraq.

4. Mahrddad Izady

The writings of Kurdish writer Mehrdad R. Izady regarding the claimed Kurdish essence of northern Iraq have influenced many, including David Axe and Dr. Victor Sharpe M.D., who repeat the history fabrications of Izady. For example, on July 30, 2007, Victor Sharpe, a medical doctor, posted an article on the web site of Israel Hasbara Committee where he copied the claims of Izady that the royal house of Adiabene was Kurdish.

This writer published a detailed response to Dr. Sharpe's statement as a guest editorial for AINA.

Visit link <http://www.aina.org/guesteds/20071029214021.pdf>

Did Dr. Sharpe M.D. study reliable history accounts, including those of 1st Century renowned Jewish historian Flavius Josephus who asserts that Adiabene (Arbella or Arbil) was Assyrian and the Adiabeni people were Assyrians? (See Whinston, William. Translator. The Works of Josephus. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers Inc. 1999.) I will leave this to the Jewish scholars to figure out. Because, if we assume that the accounts of the 1st Century father of Jewish history Josephus are false and those of Izady and Dr. Sharpe M.D. are correct, then the Jewish scholars have a lot of explaining to do and they have much to lose on an academic level. This would put a big question mark on other accounts by the famous 1st Century Jewish historian Josephus, if one assumes that he was wrong about Adiabene and Izady and Dr. Sharpe M.D. are correct.

5. Changing Educational Material

The KRG intimidates Assyrian individuals or groups that do not agree with its policies in northern Iraq. The Assyrians must accept any preconditions set by the KRG if any benefits are to be granted. For example, the Sixth Grade Geography Curriculum book taught in Syriac Schools in northern Iraq forces the Assyrians to print that Simko the warlord who murdered the Assyrian Patriarch Mar Benyamin Shimun in 1918 was a national hero. As we know, Simko invited the Assyrian patriarch to his home to negotiate peace terms. However, after the negotiations were completed and Simko accompanied the patriarch outside and as the patriarch was attempting to ride his carriage, Simko went inside immediately and his men began to open fire and shot the patriarch in the back. Is that the act of a national hero or a coward? Also, the Sixth Grade Sociology book (page 76) describes ancient peoples that inhabited Iraq and states that the Assyrians lived in Mesopotamia and in parts of Kurdistan. I just wonder, in which ancient history narratives a country by the name of Kurdistan is reported to justify the statement that ancient Assyrians lived in parts of Kurdistan. By this, the Kurdish officials are trying first to separate northern Iraq from the rest of Iraq and secondly indoctrinate young Assyrian students through the myth that Kurdistan existed in ancient times and that the Assyrians' ancestors lived and continue to live on Kurdish lands.

If the Assyrians refuse to print this in the book, the Kurdish authorities would not approve the curriculum and perhaps close the schools. The policy of the KRG is no different than that of Saddam Hussein, who was involved in the policy of forced Arabization and indoctrination of the non-Arab people in Iraq. Today, the KRG is involved in the policy of forced Kurdification and indoctrination of the non-Kurdish people in northern Iraq.

6. Iraqi President, Jalal Talabani

Jalal Talabani, the Head of the PUK and the current Iraqi president, had declared earlier that he is not aware of the presence of Assyrians in Iraq. In the hallways and corridors of the Iraqi cabinet, Kurdish officials in the Iraqi Central government continue to spread the poison that Assyrians have no lands in Iraq, thus the Iraqi Assyrian Christians are simply outsiders residing in the country.

I am bringing up these examples for two main purposes: First, it is to refute certain claims (including those of certain Assyrian groups or individuals working for the KRG currently) that claim that the undermining of Assyrian history and rewriting that of the region are not a collective policy of the KRG and Kurdish leadership. These few claim that such actions are of individual nature, but as we see from the above few examples that that is not the case and that politicians and officials of the KRG are in the center of this campaign. The second purpose is to bring attention to what is going on in northern Iraq as Kurdish politicians, officials, and writers construct their new history. They do this via a meticulous campaign that includes indoctrination, deceit, falsification and corruption of history to achieve two main goals: The first is to make everyone digest the myth of the rooted Kurdishness of northern Iraq. The second is to make everyone accept that they are Kurdistanis living on the supposedly historic Kurdish lands.

Most of the articles on Kurdish history written by Kurdish writers are in essence a collection of historical events, but those events are restructured and represented in a way that suit the Kurdish agenda in rewriting the history of northern Iraq (Assyria). Kurdish writers and officials conveniently insert the name Kurds and Kurdistan wherever and whenever necessary and with that they create a new version of Mesopotamian history, Kurdish style. One could recommend these claims to be read as a comic tale, but it is not funny either. The KRG might pay certain media groups to promote this corrupted version of history, but the KRG and those paid writers would never be able to ignore the thousands of steles, monuments, artifacts, tablets, ancient cuneiform and old Syriac texts and a wealth of history documents that prove the Assyrian essence of northern Iraq. They could not ignore tons of archaeological evidence that fill the world's museums or those pieces of history that continue to be excavated in northern Iraq, that prove beyond any reasonable doubt the strictly Assyrian origin of the region.

Let me be clear that the Kurdish people deserve attention and have the right for self-determination, but this attention and/or special treatment that they are receiving must not be granted at the expense of the demise of the indigenous ethnic people of the region, namely the Assyrians, or other ancient religious minorities such as the Yezidis.

It is unfortunate that certain non-Kurdish writers and self-proclaimed historians blindly copycat corrupted versions of history of Mesopotamia and Assyria written by certain Kurdish writers and nationalists. They do this without serious efforts to investigate such claims made by Kurdish nationalists and writers that are constructing a new history for northern Iraq (Assyria), Assyrians and for the Kurdish people. We must encourage genuine Kurdish scholars to step up to the plate and challenge these revisionists. We encourage them to write the history of Kurds in Iraq, a genuine history narrative that is, which would be respected by academia and not allow politicians and blind nationalists to write a history that is the laughing stock of the world historic and archaeological societies.

Unfortunately, the methodical campaign of denying, corrupting and usurping the history of northern Iraq and Assyrians goes on today in the supposedly new, free and democratic Iraq. What

is most unfortunate is that certain Kurdish officials and writers continue to do this while many Assyrians are busy with controversies and internal conflicts created by their churches. These churches are vulnerable and their leaders have been and continue to be influenced by certain governments in the Middle East and most recently by the empowered KRG.

Note:

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