

Kurds and Kurdistan

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Many aspects of the history of the Kurds have been assembled in recent decades by Kurdish nationalists, which fails to meet the burden of proof. Instead of living proud of being Kurds and exist as such, Kurdish nationalists have embarked on the crusade of trying very hard to prove that they descended from one ancient group after another, including Medes, Akkadians, Amorites, Hurrians, Gutians, Mitanni, Hittites, Sassanids and more recently Sumerians. These attempts have not stopped. The issue has become a historical humor.

Historian David McDowall has noted that before the Kurds began to define themselves ethnically around the 17th and 18th centuries, the term “Kurd” referred more to a socioeconomic class of nomadic tribes who moved from the mountains that define the borders between Turkey, Iran and Iraq, to the various plateaus around them.” There is a reason why Kurds claim that they originate from these ancient people:

- *Kurds claim that their origin is from the Medes, because the Medes originated in northwest modern Iran and did invade northern Iraq.

- *Kurds claim that their origin is from the Hittite, because the Hittites originated in Anatolia/eastern and central Turkey.

- *The Kurds claim that their origin is from the Mitanni, because the Mitanni originated in northern Syria.

- *The Kurds claim that their origin is from the Akkadians and Sumerians, because the Akkadians and Sumerians originated in central and southern Iraq.

With these claims, the Kurds try to justify why they are controlling many of the above regions that never belonged to them or planning to control the rest.

What are some facts about the Kurds?

Kurdish Language

Kurdish is a Western Iranian language within the Indo-European family similar to Persian. It is natural that Persian and Kurdish are considered similar in comparison. Kurdish language share many vocabulary with Persian being from the same family of languages. Kurdish has many Turkish and Arabic loanwords in it. The Turkish influence came from being under the Turkish rule for a long time and the Turkification policies of Mustafa Kamal Ataturk. The Arabic influence is attributed to two factors: First, Islam and reading the Arabic Koran which is prohibited to be translated to any other language. Second, for undergoing the Arabization policies of the Arab Ba’ath regime that affected all the non-Arab people of Iraq. The Kurdish language does not have an alphabet of its own; Kurmanji uses Latin alphabet while the Sorani uses Arabic alphabet. Kurdish spelling takes Turkish as a model but adds and subtracts certain letters according to its own needs.

There are several different dialects of the Kurdish language. Three dialects are very widely used: Northern (Kurmanji), Central (Sorani) and Southern. Other dialects such as Pehlewani and Gorani exist as well. linguistic experts have compared the difference between the Kurmanji and Sorani grammatical

structures to the difference between German and English. Kurdish language constitute dialect continuum — because Kurdish language varies based on the region, local preferences, and political circumstances. In fact, many Kurds of Sulaimaniya do not understand the Kurds of Dohuk and both regions are within Iraq. The standardization of Kurdish language within the Kurdish region in northern Iraq is attempting to bridge these differences.

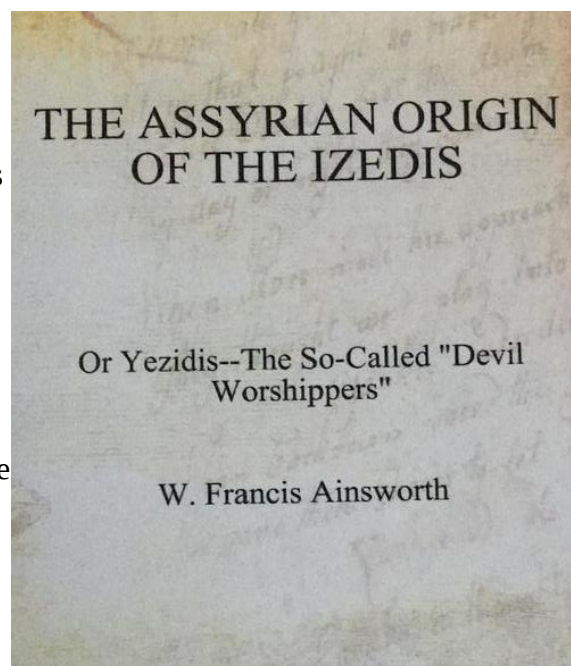
Most linguists argue that to be a rich or sophisticated language it must have a rich vocabulary, a powerful and complex grammar and is well refined and fluidly expressive. While Persian and Kurdish are genetically related, belong to the same family branch of languages, and are believed to have evolved from a common proto-language; however, the problem with the Kurdish language is that a direct predecessor of it is unknown. The extant Kurdish texts may be traced back to no earlier than the 16th Century. It is no wonder therefore that the Kurdish language lacks extensive literature.

Studies by Kurdish researchers in regards to Lexical similarity measures the similarity and/or difference between a set of words from any given two languages. Data by researchers showed that 51.5 % lexical similarity between Persian and Kurdish by using the Leipzig-Jakarta list. And due to this large resemblance between the Kurdish and Persian and somehow mutual ineligibility, it is argued that Kurdish is a dialect of Persian. Some enthusiastic Kurds exaggerate about certain aspects of the Kurdish language, its vocabulary and grammar.

Based on the above, it is safe to state that Kurdish is a not a strong language and cannot be placed in the same category as the Arabic and Syriac (السريانيه) languages for example. Some Kurds claim that the Kurdish language has close to one million words, if all words, including the various dialects and loan words were counted. Many argue that such figure is exaggerated. Still, Arabic for example has 12 million distinct words not counting the various dialects or loan words. So that tells the reader which language sets the standard.

Kurdish Religion

The overwhelming majority of the Kurds are Muslims with the majority being Sunni Muslim and a small group being Shi'aa Muslims, known as Feyli. Some Kurds try to claim that Yezidism is part of the Kurdish religion and that Yezidis are Kurds, but there are many strong arguments that refute such claims. In fact, Prince Naef Dawood of the Yezidis is against the Kurdish leaders and against any of the claims that the Yezidis are Kurds. Also, Prince Anwar Mu'aawiya of the Yezidis earlier refuted such claims by Kurdish leaders as well. He has agreed that the Yezidis have an Assyrian heritage, just as argued by many scholars, including W. Francis Ainsworth and his book, "The Assyrian Origin of the Izedis".



The Kurds in History

[The original name Kurd comes from Persian Etymology KWRT](#), which translates to Tent-Dwelling Nomad. There is no history about the Kurds before Islam. Dr. Khazal al-Majidi asserts that the Kurds appearance in history was simultaneous with the arrival of the Islamic era. In an interview by Egyptian Researcher Dr. Ahmad Saad Zayid with [Dr. Khazal al-Majidi about civilizations](#), Dr. Khazal said, quote: *the Kurds cannot claim descendancy from ancient groups such as Hittites just because a group of Kurds today live on the Hittite ancient lands. Kurds are Kurds, no more no less. Period. The Kurds are not Hittites, not Medes, not Mitannis. Certain simple people cause confusion by spreading lies to the media such as Sumerians are Kurds, Babylonians are Kurds, Akkadians are Kurds, Bet Nahrain [Mesopotamia] is Kurdish. We cannot make these false claims. We cannot build something based on lies and wrongful information. Medes are Medes. They are not Kurds. All nations do not have civilizations necessarily. Civilization is a giant structure of many factors that makes or form it and Kurds do not have a civilization. The Kurds are simple people who appeared simultaneously with the Islamic Era. We need to know the facts. And if some Kurds like to make exaggerations about who they are, then this is something that they are free to do, but I will not approve of such claims. I cannot agree with something that is not the truth or not factual. There is a limit to everything. Everything must be placed in its right place. Everything must be called by its real name. Exaggerations confuses people ... it misleads our new generations and makes them walk in a path of delusion.* End quote.

So there is a mystery about where the Kurds came from or details about their ancestors, but all legitimate historians assert that the Kurds were nomad Persians who lived in the Zagros Mountains.

حدثنا المؤرخ الاغريقي كزينوفون عام ٤٠٠ ق. م. عن الكردوخين وهم شعب عاش في منطقة الكردستان . وكان الاعتقاد السائد أنهم أجداد الأكراد . فهم جيليون فرسان ملهم ، يقطنون نفس البلاد ولهم اسم شبه إليهم . ولكن أبحاث بعض المستشرقين أمثال نولدكي في كتابه عن الأكراد ، وعارتمان وويسباخ أثبتت أن لفظة كرتدي ليست لغوياً من صيغة لفظة كرتو التي تعني : « قرواً كاليل » . ويرى هؤلاء - ٢٠ -

The Kurds claim that words such as Gorduene and Kardu that appeared in ancient texts meant Kurds.

Historian **Basile Nekitine** in his book **“Les Kurdes”** relied on linguists such as Noldeke, Hartmann and others who proved that **“the word Kurd is not a linguistic form of the word Kardu”**. that these terms are linguistically not a form of Kurd. He also showed that Corduence were different than Kurds. See page provided on the side.

العلماء أن الأكراد ينحدرون من السريين الذين ذكرهم سترابون وغيره من المؤرخين وقد كانوا يسكنون بلاد ميديا الصغرى وبلاد بريس . ثم إن العلامة ليهان بوت وهو من أشهر الباحثين المختصين بالموضوع ، أثبت في كتابه عن أصل الجيورجيين أن الكردوخين هم أجداد الجيورجيين - الكورثاليين - سكان جبال القوقاز اليوم ، وأنهم كانوا يقطنون المنطقة التي يلتقي بها الفرع الشرقي من دجلة وهو بوهتان سو بالفرع الغربي . فالشعب الكردي إذاً لا يت بصلة لشعب الكرتووخ . وقد برهن العالمان نولدكي وعارتمان أن الأكراد أتوا من بلاد فارس واستوطنوا نفس المنطقة .

We also read that the word Kurd is an obscurity. The possibility connection to Xenophon that Kurds mention repeatedly must be considered now as obsolete. This view was thoroughly discussed and rejected by linguist Theodore Noldeke (Noldeke 1898; see also Hubschmann 1904: 334). G. R. Driver (1921) had attempted to revive the Kurd / Xenophon (Armenian Kordu-k') correlation, nonetheless, it was not accepted within iranological academic circles for phonetic and historical reasons. (See **Garnik Asatryan. “Prolegomena to the Study of the Kurds”, Iran and the Caucasus Vol 13, No. 1. Yerevan State University. Brill, 2009**)

Being predominantly Sunni Muslims was the reason why the Ottoman Turkish sultan brought them from the Persian territories of the Zagros Mountains and placed them on the Persian-Turkish borders to be the buffer zone to protect the Sunni Ottoman Empire from the expanding Shi'a Muslims Safavid Empire. This happened after the 1514 Battle of Chaldiran between the Sunni Ottoman Empire and the Shia Safavid Persians Empire. The Sunni Kurds sided with the fellow sectarian Sunni Ottomans who won the final decisive battle. The Kurds were empowered and they began to massacre the indigenous populations in the eastern Ottoman Empire and seize their lands.

The Kurdish Homeland – Kurdistan

Kurd-i-stan, or the land of Kurds, is similar to Afghanistan (land of Afghans), Turkomanistan (land of Turkomans), Uzbekistan (land of Uzbeks), Baluchistan (land of Baloch), Tajikistan (land of Tajiks), etc. Kurdistan is a virtual region – it never existed in the political sense in history, let alone ancient history.

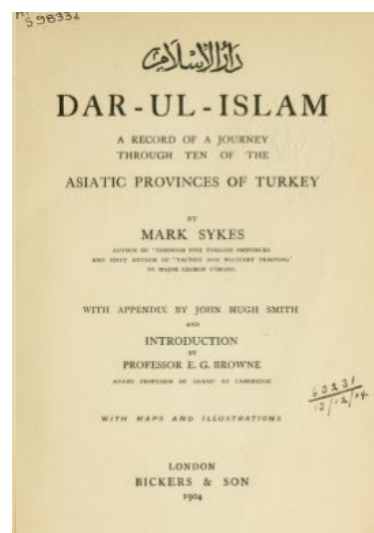
Travelers and explorers to the eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire superimposed the word Kurdistan (land of Kurds) on existing maps of the time to simply reflect that Kurds lived in the regions they visited, which were mostly the Zagros Mountain and eastern modern Turkey. Those travelers did not conduct a scientific census or have official data to know the exact population data where they defined as Kurdistan. They simply defined Kurdistan where Kurds existed, regardless of population data. This region of Kurdistan expanded on those virtual Kurdistan maps every time people encountered additional Kurds living in other regions. With time, this virtual Kurdistan became as large as the area of Iraq and Syria combined. However, there were existing and recognized countries already in those localities the Kurds inhabited when this virtual Kurdistan was superimposed by those travelers. Those countries/kingdoms were Persia and the Ottoman Empire. With that a historical and political forgery was committed against all countries involved (Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria) by superimposing the name Kurdistan on them. Kurdish tribes were revolting against the Ottomans and the Persians. But we must understand the sentiment behind those revolts. Zeynep Kaya tells us that *“the early 20th Century Kurdish revolts against the Ottomans give significant insights to how Kurdish tribal leaders defined their territoriality. However, these revolts were the result of tribal leaders’ efforts to maintain their territoriality in the face of Ottoman centralisation policies, but these efforts were not underlined by nationalist sentiments in the way nationalism was defined in Europe in the nineteenth century or defined by Kurds today”*.

The American [King-Crane Commission Report](#) of August 28, 1919 recommended that the unity of Mesopotamia be preserved, but the precise boundaries to be determined by a special commission on boundaries, after the mandate has been assigned. It should probably include at least the Ottomans Vilayets (provinces) of Basra, Bagdad, and Mosul. And the Assyrians and some of the Kurds might well be linked up with Mesopotamia. The wisdom of a united country needs no argument in the case of Mesopotamia. The Report considered Kurdistan in the following context: *II. Kurdistan. The Kurds claim a very large area, on the basis of their distribution, but since they are greatly mixed with Armenians, Turks, and others, and divided among themselves into Kizilbash, Shiite and Sunnites it seems best to limit them to the natural geographical area which lies between the proposed Armenia on the north and Mesopotamia on the south, with the divide between the Euphrates and the Tigris as the western boundary, and the Persian frontier as the eastern boundary.*

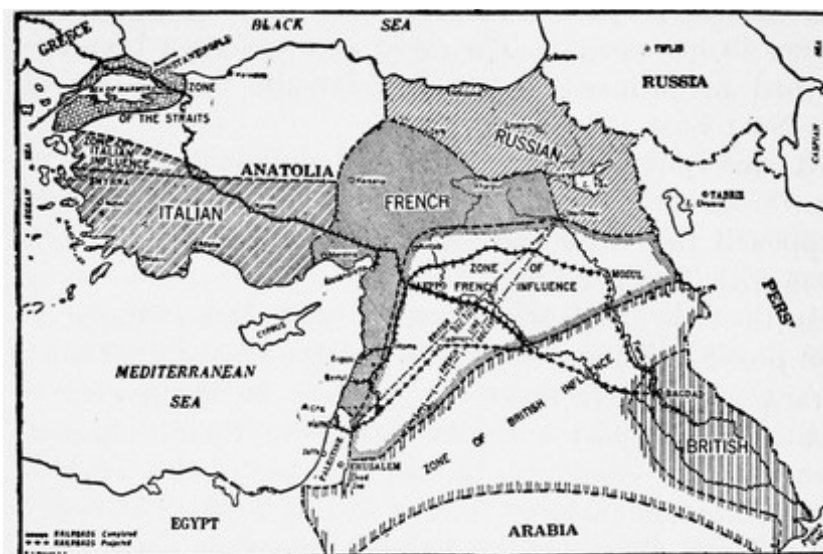
In the secretive 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement between the British and French, a Kurdish state was addressed to be strictly the central eastern parts of Turkey. However, it was not shown on the actual map they published. Also, there was no connection to any future Kurdish regions in Iraq or Syria in that scheme.



NOMAD KURDS.



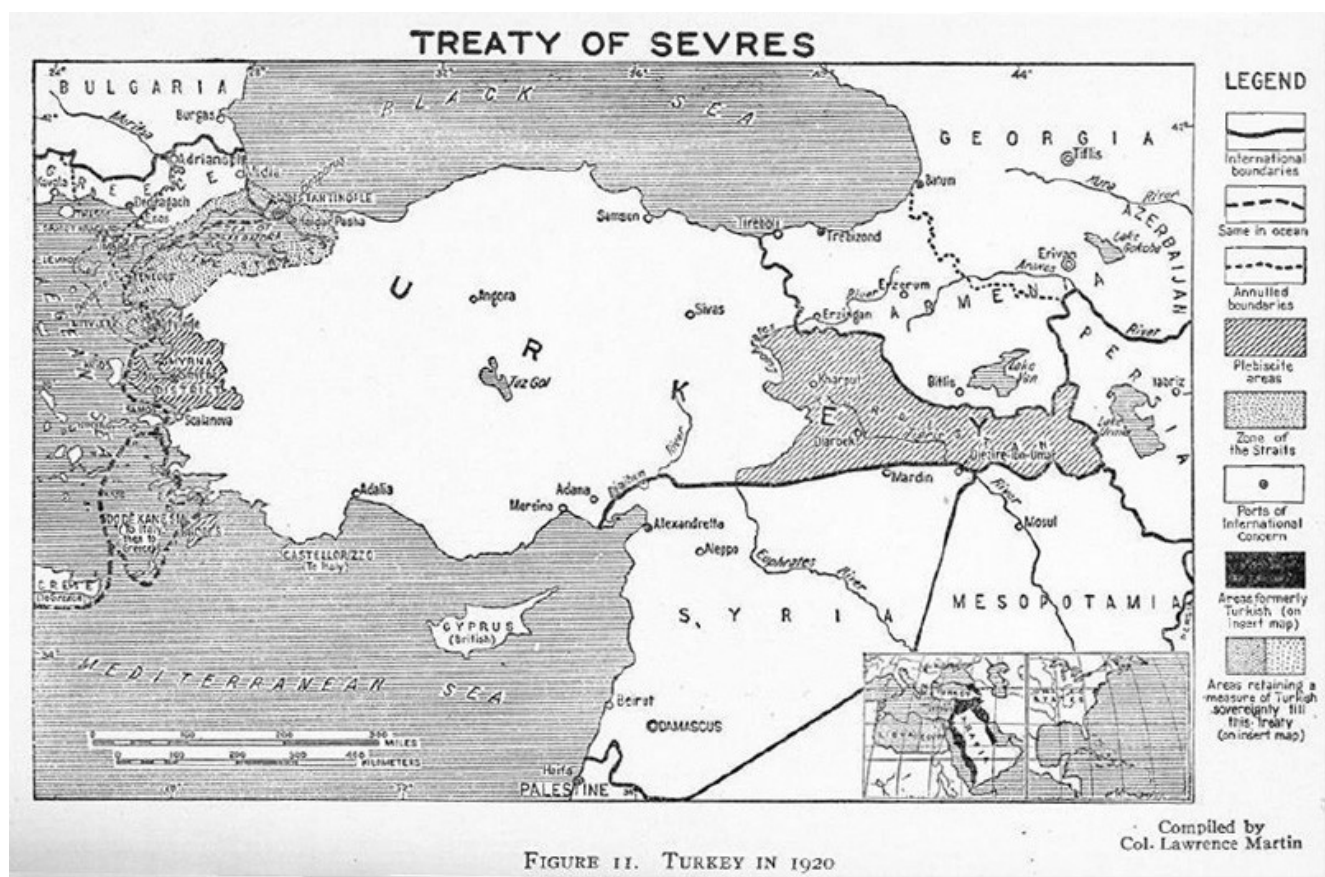
The picture of nomad Kurds is published in the 1904 book “Dar-ul-Islam” (The House of Islam) by Mark Sykes (author of Sykes-Picot Agreement) who traveled to the Ottoman Empire and wrote a couple of books about the Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire.



HOW TURKEY WAS CARVED BY SIX SECRET AGREEMENTS

The Franco-Russo-British agreement of March, 1915, gave Russia Constantinople. The Sazonov-Paléologue treaty of April 26, 1916, delimited the French and Russian shares in Asia. The Sykes-Picot treaty of May, 1916, divided what lay beyond between France and Great Britain. The treaty of London, April 26, 1915, gave Italy the region of Adalia. The St. Jean de Maurienne agreement, completed in August, 1917, promised Italy Smyrna and the rest of the territory shown. The Clemenceau-Lloyd George understanding of December, 1918, transferred Mosul to Great Britain, but left a dispute as to whether the new line should run east or west of Tadmar.

As Turks under Mustafa Kamal Pasha were winning battles in the western parts, Kamal gained strength and confidence. Kamal rejected the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres that was signed by Ottoman Sultan Mehmet VI in which Assyro-Chaldeans [Assyrians] and Kurds were promised their own homelands in Mosul and eastern Turkey respectively. The West did not want to get involved in a confrontation or war with Turkey that has become relatively strong or jeopardize its relations with the newly created Arab Kingdom of Iraq. Kamal forced a new agreement which became known as the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The article about the Homelands for various groups within Turkey was dropped.



The Kurdish region in the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres was pending the approval of the inhabitant of the region through a vote. Also, we can see that northern Iraq was not part of that region and it remained known as Mesopotamia. The Assyro-Chaldeans (Assyrians) were also promised a self rule in and around Mosul.

The unrest caused by the Kurdish tribes in northern Iraq was met by the British who created the Republic of Iraq in 1921, but placed it under the British mandate. Less than a century ago, parts of the current Sulaimaniya province were considered Persian territories while others were considered Iraqis. The border disputes between the two countries were finally compromised with the directions of Great Britain and many Kurds of the region became part of Iraq.

The Kurds have continued their revolt in the region. In 1943, Mulla Mustafa Barzani led a tribal revolt against the Iraqi government. In January 1946, the Kurds announced the creation of the Kurdish Mahabad Republic in western Iran (bordering Iraq). However, the young republic was crushed by the Iranian Army in December 1946. Certain Kurdish leaders, such as Qazi Muhammad, were hanged while others were imprisoned. Mulla Mustafa escaped to Russia, but ended up in northern Iraq where he started the Kurdish revolt that gathered momentum in 1961. By the way, Masoud Barzani, who succeeded his father Mulla Mustafa as the head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) was born in Iran and not in Iraq.

The semi independent Kurdish region in northern Iraq was established in 1992 and later recognized post the 2003 US invasion of Iraq and in accordance to the 2005 Iraqi Constitution. That region

included the three Dohuk, Arbil and Sulaymaniyah provinces. Officials of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) unilaterally created a small fourth province, which they carved out from Sulaimaniya province. The PUK did this so that they control two provinces similar to the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Barzani that control the two provinces of Arbil and Dohuk. The parliament of Iraq has yet to approve this action by the Kurds.

There is nothing that proves that a political state named Kurdistan ever existed. Today, someone can stand in Miami and say this is Mexico. Does that mean that Miami has become Mexico and people can start superimposing Mexico on US maps? It is ludicrous! Yes, one can write about Mexicans living in Miami and about their culture, but Miami is not Mexico. The Kurds have been doing the same exact thing since some two centuries ago when missionaries and other explorers started the trend. It is ludicrous, but people keep repeating it because the great powers promoted a historical lie to make that an on going issue and a playing card to use when needed against Iraq and Syria particularly while allowing Ankara to deal with the Kurdish militias harshly.

Historically, Northern Iraq is not Kurdistan

The expanded virtual Kurdistan map today includes northern Iraq, historic Assyria. The heartland of Assyria, which included Mosul and Arbil provinces was never Kurdish lands. Here are few undisputed historical and archaeological facts:

1. Archaeological excavations around Assyrian mounds suggest that the region was inhabited by 5000 BC. The Assyrian cities of Ashur, Nineveh and Arbil had been long established by 2500 BC and their mounds contain the evidence by which we could track developments in Assyria. **(H.W.F. Saggs, The Might That Was Assyria, London, 1984, page 21)**
2. Nineveh is one of the four capitals of the Assyrian Empire. It was established as a capital by Assyrian King Sennacherib who ruled (704–681BC). Historic Nineveh is on the east side on the Tigris River in northern Iraq while the city of Mosul was built on the other side of the river after the fall of Nineveh. The two ancient and new cities face each other. Both cities are part of the Iraqi Nineveh governorate. **(Georges Contenau, Everyday Life in Babylon and Assyria, London, 1954)**
3. There is no proof that the Kurds have a Jewish origin. The Kurds in recent years began to spread these claims about this Jewish connection based on their presence in Arbil. Of course, Arbil is an ancient Assyrian city and was the center of the Assyrian religious temple of goddess Ishtar and remained Assyrian in essence even after the fall of the Assyrian Empire. Arbil and the regions around it became known as Adiabene, the center of Christianity in early Christian times.

Can Kurds claim that Adiabene was Kurdish or had Kurdish population in early Christianity?
NO. Why?

Check the following historical references:

- a) There is not a single reliable source that shows that the royal house of Adiabene (the region of ancient Arbela, modern Arbil in northern Iraq) was Kurdish; in fact it was Assyrian. Only

Kurdish writers make the wild claims that Queen Helena and her sons Izates and Monobazus of Adiabene royal house that converted to Judaism were Kurdish, similar to other wild claims. There is no better authority that describes early Jewish history, including the Royal House of Adiabene, than the first century Jewish renowned historian Flavius Josephus. Josephus clearly states that the inhabitants of Adiabene or the "Adiabeni" were Assyrians (**Whinston, William. Translator. The Works of Josephus. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers Inc. 1999**). Would we refer to the claims of 21st Century Kurdish nationalists when we have a 1st Century Jewish authority to refer to about a subject?

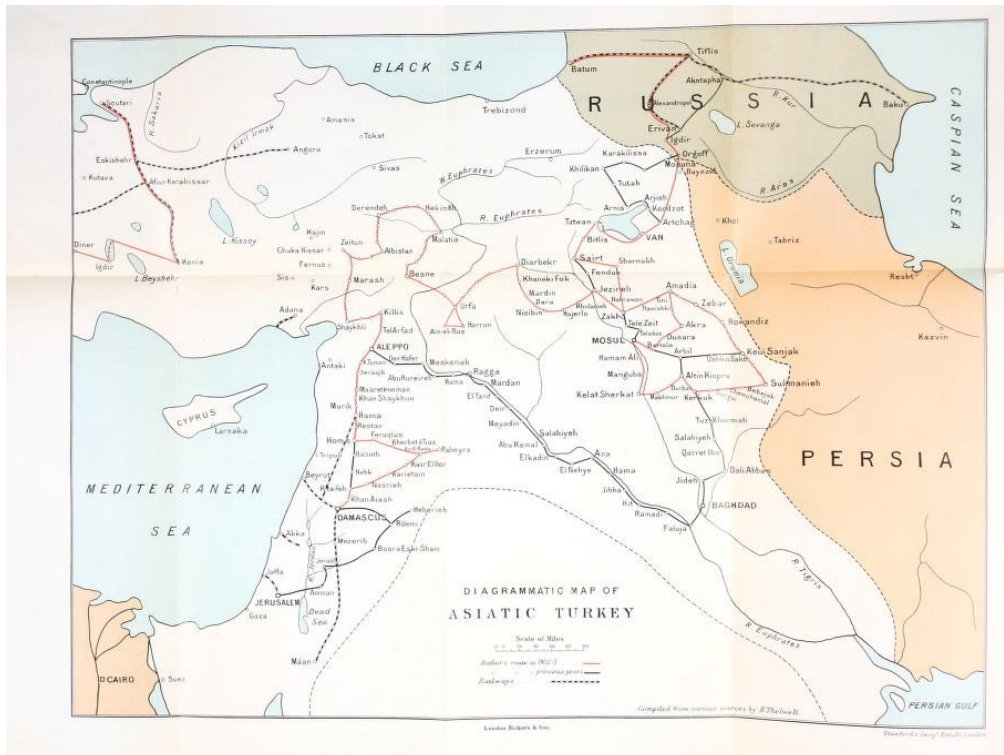
b) It is well established historically that when the heartland of Assyria was back into focus in early Christianity (during the Parthian era and about six centuries after the fall of the Assyrian Empire), "it was with an Assyrian, not a Persian let alone Greek, self-identification: the temple of Ashur was restored, the city was rebuilt, and an Assyrian successor state that returned in the shape of the client kingdom of Adiabene" (**Crone, Patricia & Michael Cook. Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977**).

c) Judaism flourished in the second century of the Christian era in Adiabene, but Adiabene at the time was and as Gibbon refers to it "primitive Assyria" (**Gibbon, Edward. The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. David Womersley, ed. Penguin Books, 2000**).

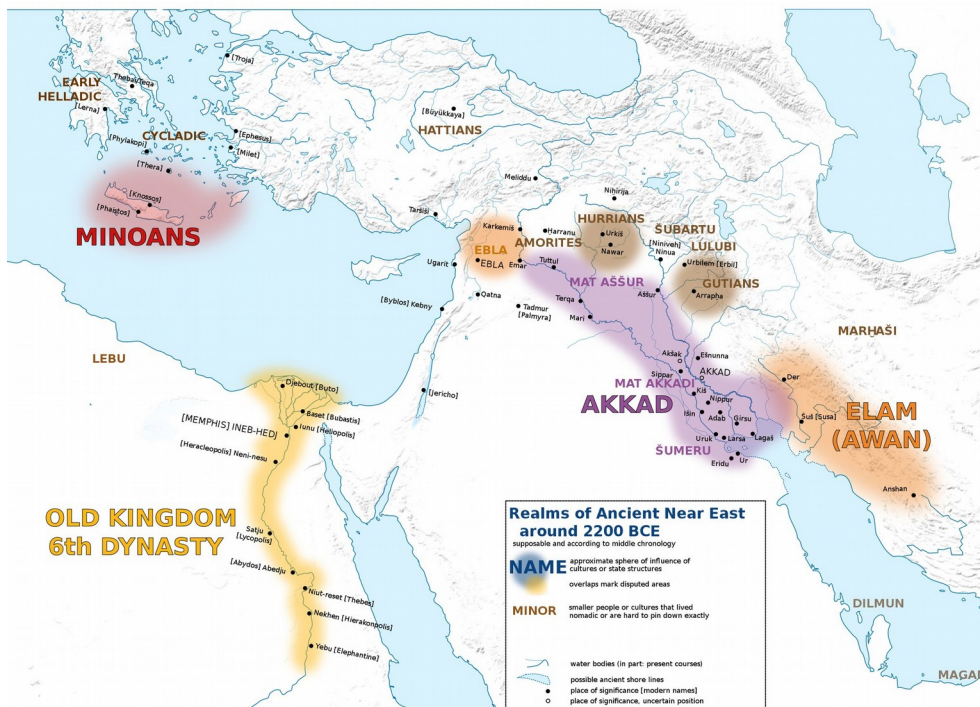
d) There should be no confusion at all about the Jews of northern Iraq. The Aramaic speaking Jews of northern Iraq have no blood relation with the Kurds. The Aramaic speaking Jews of northern Iraq and northwestern Iran for that matter are very clear regarding who they are. The Jews in and around Zakho (northern Iraq) speak Aramaic and know themselves strictly and clearly as Jews for the same reason that the Kurds know themselves as Kurds: because they know themselves to be different from the others. The Jews of northern Iraq do not consider themselves Kurdish Jews, as some Kurdish politicians and historians do, and the Kurds do not consider themselves as Jews. The Jews did not adopt a Kurdish language 2,600 years ago; they took the Assyrian-Aramaic language.

4. There is no proof whatsoever, archaeological or historical, that proves that people under this name of Kurds inhabited Mesopotamia in ancient times. [Northern Mesopotamia was never Kurdish](#), unfortunately, some writers tend to politicize history sometimes.
5. Furthermore, the regions of southeast Turkey and northeast Syria were never Kurdish either. The continuous Kurdish expansion in the following decades of the Battle of Chaldiran slowly spread the Kurds into Anatolia and southeast Turkey. Then the aftermath of the 1925 rebellion of Kurdish Sheikh Saeed (Said) against Turkey, [pushed thousands of Kurds into Syria](#).

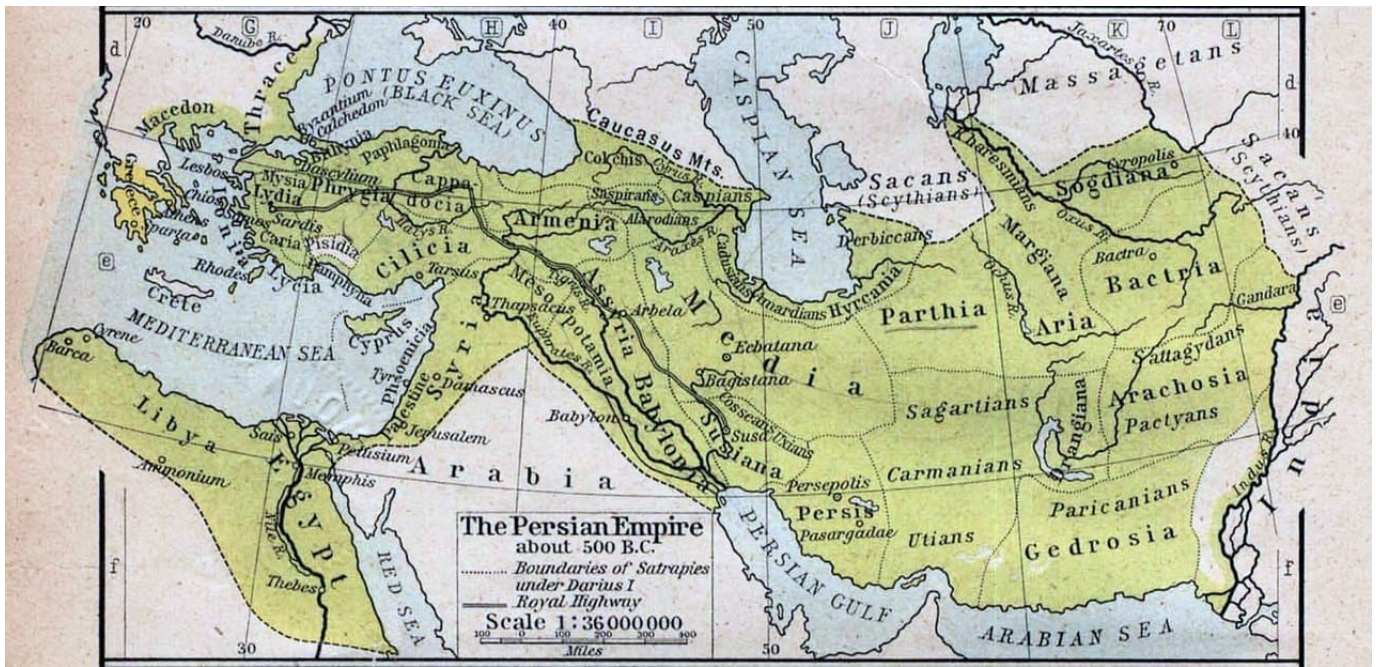
First, let us view this most official and latest map of the region that was used by Mark Sykes (of the Sykes-Picot Agreement) in his 1904 book "Dar-ul-Islam". Sykes traveled to the region of Asiatic Turkey and wrote about the people of the region. He did not show a region under the name of Kurdistan in his map.



Let us now also check all the below historic maps of the Near East (Middle East) in various periods and by various groups and empires. We could clearly see that no such state under the name of Kurdistan existed.



The Ancient Near East around 2200 BC



The Persian Empire about 500 BC



Persian Empire during Darius and Xerxes 522 – 465 BC



The Hellenistic World in 281 BC



The Empire of the Armenian King Tigranes the Great 95 - 55 BC



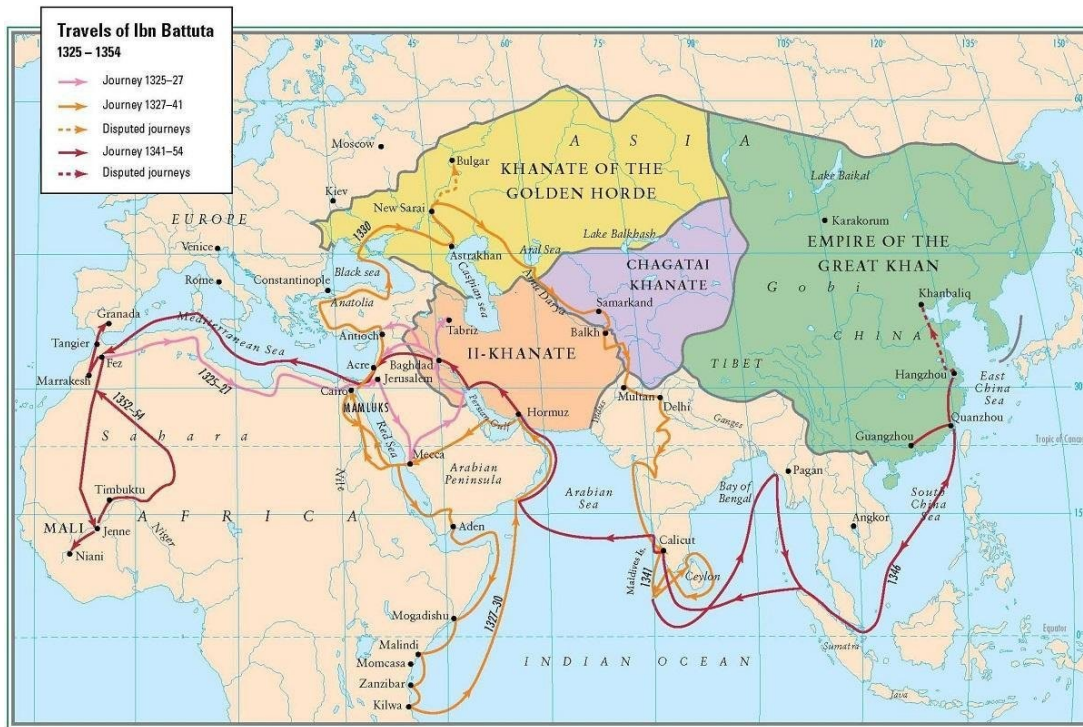
The Roman Empire from Augustus (27 BC – 14 AD) to Trajan (98 – 117 AD), BYU project

خريطة الشرق الأدنى في عام 330 ميلادي | من
وثائقي محطة DW الألمانية "النهضة - عصر
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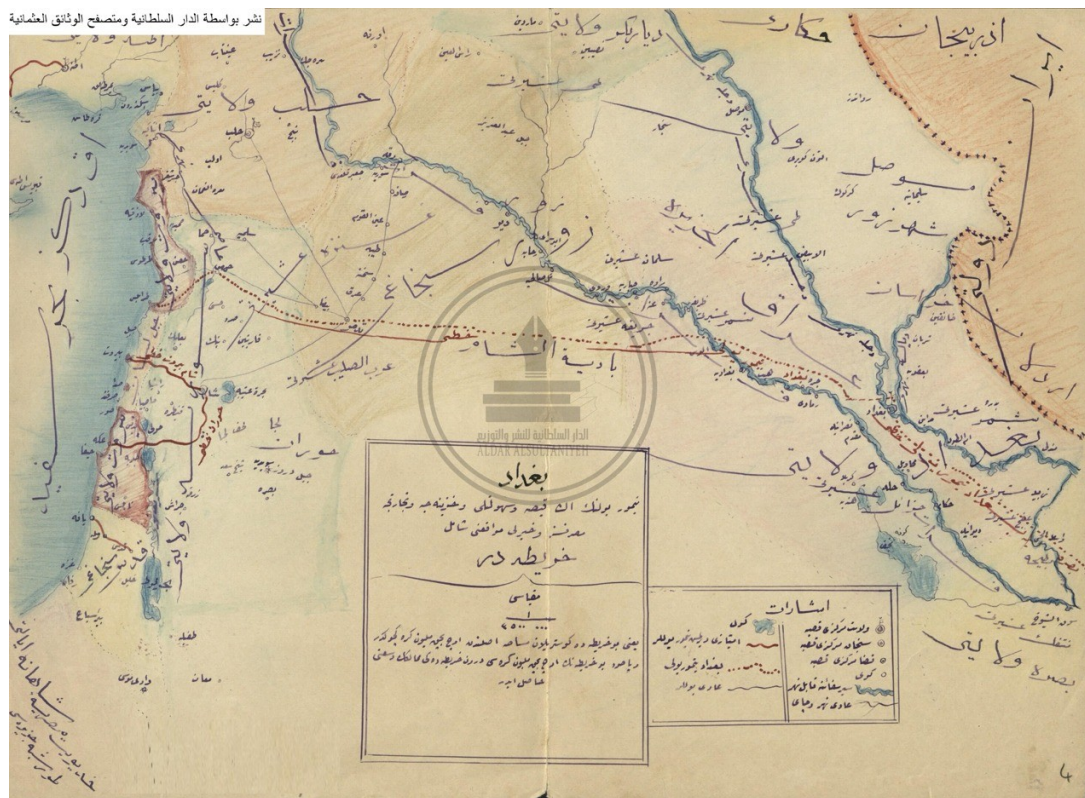
#أرمينيا #القوقاز #آشور #سوريا #فلسطين #مصر
#شبه الجزيرة العرب #كابادوكيا #مقدونيا
#تراقيا #ميزوبوتاميا #بلاد الرافدين #كيليكية



The Near East 330 AD from a Documentary from the German TV Station DW



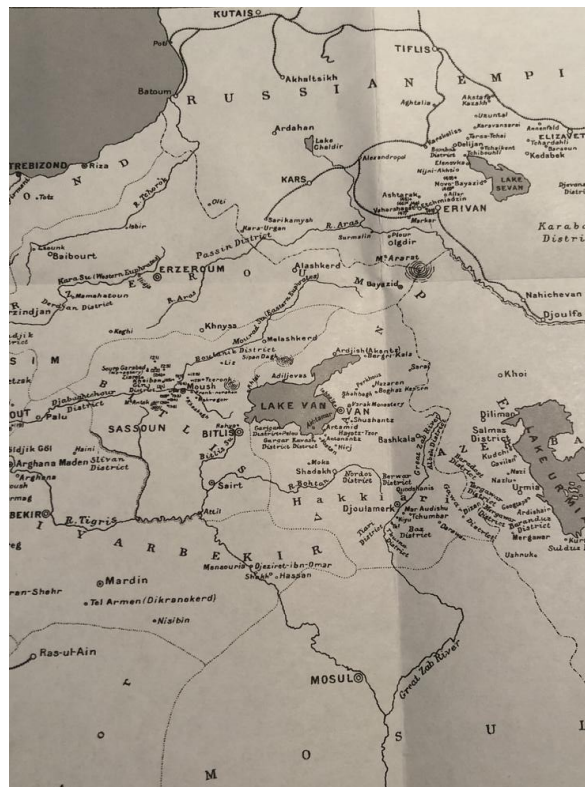
The Travels of the Famous Ibn Battuta 1325 – 1354



The Ottoman provinces of Baghdad, Mosul, Aleppo and Syria



Ottoman Empire 1919-1920



The eastern part of a larger 1915-1917 map of the Ottoman Empire provided as part of the documentation to the Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Now that we have shown that Kurdistan never existed on real maps of the Middle East, Near East, Ottoman Empire and others, let us inspect the maps that virtual Kurdistan were superimposed on them. In those virtual maps, we will see that Kurdistan in general is around the Zagros mountainous regions of Iran, Turkey and a mountainous strip region that makes the borders of northeastern Iraq and Iran. Mosul, Arbil, Kirkuk were not part of that virtual Kurdistan — these regions were always known as northern Mesopotamia and never Kurdish historically. [Kurdistan and Mesopotamia were always separate regions](#). These Iraqi regions became part of the virtual Kurdistan in the mid 20th Century as Kurds increased in numbers in northern Iraq through the influx of Kurds from Turkey and Iran and the continuous oppression, persecution and expulsion of the local Assyrian population.

It is for that one simple and convincing fact that a person cannot find a single archaeological piece that belongs to people known as Kurds anywhere in northern Iraq, northeast Syria or the entire region of modern Iraq for that matter.

History is written by people, who sometimes impose their personal narrative on their readers. However, since the mid 19th Century, the science of archeology became the source and vital guide to explain ancient history. Archeology refutes all Kurdish claims, because there is not a single archaeological remain, stele, monument, stone or anything that is coined Kurdish.

After making all this clear to the reader, I would like to stress, this attempt to educate is not to reject the rights of Kurds to live in peace similar to other people; however, that right must not be secured at the expense of the indigenous Assyrians and the Yezidis, because [these indigenous people have the right](#) to live in peace and freedom on their ancestral lands in accordance to the September 13, 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).