

Kurds Are Not Related to Medes

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Real scholars accept the only accurate narrative that Kurds are nomad Persians who lived in the Zagros Mountains. There are few other narratives that have been constructed more recently as the Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq began to pay writers and some wannabe historians to construct a new Kurdish history by patching a word from here and another from there.

Here are two excerpts in from the Chronicle of Bar Hebraeus, a thirteenth-century scholar and prelate of the Syriac Orthodox Church. These excerpts were taken from the Chronicon Syriacum by Gregorii Barhebraei (Paris: 1890).

“And in the year four hundred and twenty-seven (1035 Islamic Calendar) of the Atayyaye (Arabs), Bar Watab, the Numairian, the governor of Harran, collected a vast number of Kurdaye (Kurds) and Ma'daye (Medes) ...” (p. 217)

“And in the year six hundred and two (1205 Islamic) of the Tayyaye (Arabs), a race of the Kurdaye (Kurds) who were in the mountains of Madai (Media), and who are called Tirahaye, came down from the mountains, and wrought great destruction in those countries. And troops of the Parsaye (Persians) were gathered together, and they met them in battle and many of them were killed.” (p. 420)

Notes:

[1] As we can see, the Kurds and the Medes are classified as two distinct group of people.

[2] Further, Bar Hebraeus geographically locates the “race of the Kurds” as inhabiting the mountains of Media. ([See Mark Gewargis](#))

Note: The Mountains of Media are basically the Mountains of Zagros.

This is what we know scholarly:

1. Vladimir F Minorsky, Russian academic, historian, and scholar of Oriental studies, best known for his contributions to the study of history of Iran and the Iranian peoples such as Persians, Laz people, Lurs, and Kurds, writes that *the history of the Kurds is mysterious and vague*.

2. Bernard Lewis , British American historian specialized in Oriental studies. He was the Cleveland E. Dodge Professor Emeritus of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, said that ***Kurds belong to the Persian tribes.***
3. P. M. Holt, Prof of Arab History in the University of London and publisher of the 1970 “The Cambridge History of Islam” states that ***the Kurds are nomad Persian.***
4. Michael Morony in his 1983 book, “Iraq After the Muslim Conquest”, writes ***that the word Kurd is synonymous with bandits.***
5. David McDowall in his book “A Modern History of the Kurds”, states that ***the word Kurd does not refer to an ethnic group, rather mercenaries, outlaws and fleeing robbers that lived in and around the Zagros Mountains.***
6. Prof. Garnik Asatrian in his study “Prolegomena to the Study of the Kurds”, Iran and the Caucasus Vol 13, No. 1. Yerevan State University. Brill, 2009, page 82, writes: “***The documented history of the term Kurd, as was shown above, starts from the 6th-7th Centuries AD. Before that period, there is little reliable evidence of its earlier forms.***” He adds later, ***Kurd is an obscurity.*** He later writes, the word Kurd comes from the original Kwrt, a Persian term which means Tent-Dwellers.
7. Prof. Khazal al-Majidi, who is expert on religions and civilizations, says that ***Kurds are Kurds, they have no link to ancient groups and that they appeared in history with the emergence of Islam in the 7th Century. Kurds are Kurds and Medes are Medes.The two are different.***
8. Basile Nikitine Book, “Les Kurdes” (The Kurds), says, “***the word Kurdish is not a linguistic form of the word Kardu***”. This book was written 1943 but was not able to publish it until 1956 with help of French writers including Louis Massignon and the French National Center for Scientific Research. ***So there is no link between Kurd some forms of other words that sound similar to Kurd.***
9. Basile Nikitine Book, “Les Kurdes” (The Kurds), 1956. Page 20. The most important document that reflects the opinion of the Kurds about their origin is Sharaf-Nama’s book, which was written in Persian by Prince Sharafkhan Bidlisi in 1596.

The author tells the story of the ruthless Iranian King Zahak who contracted a weird disease of growing a snake on each of his shoulders. The doctors were unable to cure him. Satan advised him that he needed to use an ointment that is extracted from the brain of young boys and that he needed to sacrifice two boys daily for that purpose. The executioner who killed the boys, felt sorry for killing two boys daily, so he began to kill one boy and use the brain of a sheep as a replacement for the brain of the second boy. The boys that he saved daily were sent to a distance mountainous area where they were safe. These boys grew up, multiplied and became the Kurds.

Is this how history is constructed? Which nation constructs its history based on a myth? Let us be sure that the Kurd’s central theme of their history derives from ethnocentricities and nothing is based on academic endeavor.

10. Arshak Safrastian, *Kurds and Kurdistan*, The Harvill Press, 1948, p. 16 and p. 31, writes, ***books from the early Islamic era, including those containing legends like the Shahnameh and the Middle Persian Kar-Nmag i Ardashir i Pabagan and other early Islamic sources provide early attestation of the term kurd in the sense of "Iranian nomads". The term Kurd in the Middle Persian documents simply means nomad and tent-dweller and could be attributed to any Iranian ethnic group having similar characteristics.***

11. Wladimir Ivanon, "The Gabrdi dialect spoken by the Zoroastrians of Persia", Published by G. Bardim 1940. pg 42, writes, ***"The term Kurd in the middle ages was applied to all nomads of Iranian origin"***.

12. Martin van Bruinessen, "The ethnic identity of the Kurds", in: *Ethnic groups in the Republic of Turkey*, compiled and edited by Peter Alford Andrews with Rüdiger Benninghaus [=Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients, Reihe B, Nr.60]. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwich Reichert, 1989, pp. 613–21, we read: ***The ethnic label "Kurd" is first encountered in Arabic sources from the first centuries of the Islamic era; it seemed to refer to a specific variety of pastoral nomadism, and possibly to a set of political units, rather than to a linguistic group: once or twice, "Arabic Kurds" are mentioned. By the 10th century, the term appears to denote nomadic and/or transhumant groups speaking an Iranian language and mainly inhabiting the mountainous areas to the South of Lake Van and Lake Urmia, with some offshoots in the Caucasus...If there was a Kurdish-speaking subjected peasantry at that time, the term was not yet used to include them.***

13. David N. Mackenzie, "The Origin of Kurdish", Transactions of Philological Society, 1961, pp 68–86, we read: ***If we take a leap forward to the Arab conquest we find that the name Kurd has taken a new meaning becoming practically synonymous with 'nomad', if nothing more pejorative.***

14. The term "Kurds" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2007. Brill Online. Accessed 2007, we read, ***We thus find that about the period of the Arab conquest a single ethnic term Kurd (plur. Akrād) was beginning to be applied to an amalgamation of Iranian or iranicised tribes.***

15. In *Kurds, Kurdistan*. Encyclopedia of Islam. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W. P. Heinrichs, Brill, 2009. Brill OnLine. ***The classification of the Kurds among the Iranian nations is based mainly on linguistic and historical data and does not prejudice the fact there is a complexity of ethnical elements incorporated in them". We thus find that about the period of the Arab conquest a single ethnic term Kurd (plur. Akrād) was beginning to be applied to an amalgamation of Iranian or iranicised tribes.***

Most importantly is the fact that few authentic Median words were documented; therefore, too few for any sweeping assumption to concretely substantiate that a linguistic connection between Kurds and Medes existed.¹

From all the above we can see that there is no relationship between the Kurds and ancient Medes.

1 Ferdinand Hennenbichler. *The History of Kurds*. Edition Winterwork (Printshop). Germany. 2011