

To the participants in seeking a solution to the Kerkuk problem: **The historical anatomy of Kerkuk region**

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The today's complications of Kerkuk problem, which threaten the already insecure situation in Iraq, originate mainly from the obstinate attempts of the Kurdish political parties, supported by the Peshmerga militia, to contain the province, while both the Turkmen and the Arabs of Kerkuk support the shared administration and an independent Kerkuk province annexed to Baghdad.

It is important to be known that if the indigenous inhabitants of a region are considered to be the first degree citizens, then, today most of the populations of the globe should be considered as secondary citizens.

Considering that the historical nature of Kerkuk region is one of the important factors which influence the fate of Kerkuk region, SOITM presents in this study history of presence of the Turkmen and the Kurds in Kerkuk region.

Introduction

The eternal fire, or Baba Gurgur, was considered the main cause of the celebrity of Kerkuk region since millennia. This was the main factor which attracted the travelers to Kerkuk region. The local production of oil for more than two centuries gained Kerkuk a significant fame and stable moderate economical importance. In 1878, Geary investigated the oil fields in Kerkuk and mentioned:¹

“There is a large market for petroleum in Baghdad, and the other cities; exportation, on a large scale, would not be difficult, for there is water-carriage the whole way from Hit, and nearly the whole way from Kerkuk to the sea”

It seems that the same factors motivated the English troops to complete the occupation of Ottoman’s Mosul region, which included Kerkuk, after the armistice at the end of First World War. Geary, in 1878, said:²

“if European science were brought to bear upon the matter, it is very possible that the inexhaustible supply for petroleum existing here and at Hit, on the Euphrates, would become of great commercial importance” “There is no limit to the supply which might be easily procured from kerkook”

Kerkuk’s regional fame has further increased after finding huge oil deposits, and industrialization of the oil production began in 1927.

In the second half of the 20th century, Kerkuk region became known for the assimilation policies of Ba’ath regime, which made huge changes to the demography of the region.

The other important characteristics of Kerkuk region are the large Kerkuk citadel, the shrine of Prophet Daniel, the ruminants of Nuzu civilization in Yorgan Tepe, Arrapkha of the Assyrians and Yeşil Kömbet (Green Tomb) of the Seljuks. Kerkuk is also well known for the immense fertile plains and ample water streams.

With the internationalization of the Iraqi problem and ongoing attempts of the Kurdish authorities to appropriate Kerkuk region, Kerkuk issues have gained attention worldwide. The region has been exposed to other fierce demographical changes. It started at the beginning of occupation by Kurdification of the administration in Kerkuk region by the American military authorities. Hundreds of thousands of Kurds were brought and established in the province of Kerkuk.

But in order to have such a wealthy region, the Kurdish authorities were obliged to present authoritative reasons to the Iraqi people and to the international community. The Kurdish claims were based on a variety of explanations including that Kerkuk region is:

- predominantly Kurdish,
- historically Kurdish region

It is worth noting that the present Kurdish region, which includes the provinces of Erbil, Sulaymaniya and Duhok lacks the economical sources to survive independently.

After failure to prove the above mentioned claims, the Kurdish authorities abandoned their former claims and started in the last few years claiming that Kerkuk region is a Kurdistan region.

This article discusses the historical demography of the latter several centuries of Kerkuk region. It forms essential background information for the experts and the authorities currently participating in finding a solution to the problems in Kerkuk.

The Turkmen in Kerkuk

History of the Turkmen presence in Kerkuk

Available credible sources, point to the uninterrupted settlements of Turkmen in Kerkuk region beginning from the Abbasids period (744 AD) to the Seljuks (1055 AD) and their Atabegs, the Mongols (1258 AD), the White and Black Sheep Turkmen reigns, Safavids and Ottomans. This idea was supported by the Mosul commission of the League of Nations in 1924. The English envoy to the same commission rejected the origin of Turkmen to be related to the Ottomans, and supported the idea that Kerkuk Turkmen are possibly the descendents of the soldiers employed by the Abbasid Caliphs.³ The same was presented by the Encyclopedia of Islam by adding the Seljuks period.⁴ Soane agrees with the Seljuk origin of Kerkuk Turkmen. Lyon says that Turkmen of the region descended from the camp followers of Timor the Lame in 14th century.⁵ Edmonds gives the following origins; the Seljuk, Timor the Lane, Safavids and Ottomans.⁶ Hay agrees with the English envoy to the Mosul commission and with the encyclopedia of Islam, he also rejects the Ottoman origin of the Turkmen. He believes that they are descendents of the Seljuks.⁷ Gertreude says:⁸

'They are Turks, you know, these Kirkuk people, but not Ottoman; they came in at the time of the early Seljuq invasions'

Longrigg speaks about earlier immigrations.⁹ Marr points to the Turkmen tribal states (White and Black sheep Turkmen) at 14th and 15th centuries as the ancestors of Kerkuk and Erbil Turkmen.¹⁰

Turkmen and Kerkuk in different ages

The Turkmen constituted the second largest components of the Iraqi population in both the Buyids and the Seljuks eras.¹¹ Longrigg left Iraq in 1931 after 16 years work. He served as political officer in Kerkuk in early 1920s. His comment on the Turkmen nature of the population of Kerkuk city in the 15th and 16th century is presented in his book "Four centuries of modern Iraq" as follows:^{12, 13}

"Of the settled and governed part of the Shahrizor province, nothing is left on record. Neither the pleasant city of Kirkuk, nor the string of Turkmen towns on the main route nor the many villages of the rain cultivators, had changed character in the last 2 centuries. Turkish influence, where government found blood, tongue and religion congenial, had deepened more than the Arab plains or Kurdish mountains even made possible"

"The quarters east of the wide stream-bed were yet unbuilt. Arbil — strikingly similar to Kirkuk in natural structure and in race— was as remote from its Arab and closer akin to its Kurdish Neighbors"

The Ottoman archives confirm the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk in the 16th century.¹⁴ According to Olson,¹⁵ in the 16th century,¹⁶ Tawuk, which was larger than Kerkuk, was inhabited by Turkmen sultan Gundogmus Bekdilu and his followers.¹⁵ Longrigg mentioned that the Turkmen and Chaldeans,¹⁷ held the Kerkuk citadel for 3 weeks against the overwhelming army of Nadir Shah of the Safavids in 1730s:¹⁸

Kerkuk population by travelers before the 20th century

Despite that it is extremely difficult to present an accurate data on the population nature of a region after investigation for few days, travelers, who usually remained for few days in Kerkuk, are still considered the significantly reliable

sources of information. In this section first-hand references of those who themselves visited or resided in Kerkuk are presented.

Most of the travelers were either coming from the south or from the north and some of them from the east. The majority passed through the main cities on the High (or old) Way. From the south: Kara Tepe, Kifri, Tuz Khurmatu, Tawuk, Kerkuk and Altun kopru to Erbil. (Map 1) Several other smaller towns or villages were mentioned by some travelers. From south: Delli Abbas, Chubuklu, Yengice, Bayat region, Tepelliler, Taze Khurmatu and Tisin.

Many travelers, who visited Kerkuk for several days, gave no information about the population nature of the region, for example, Rauwolf (15 – 16.12.1575),¹⁹ Niebuhr (1792),²⁰ Jackson (1797),²¹ Olivier (end 18th century), the travels of Rolando (1800),²² Aboul Taleb Khan (1818),²³ De Beaujour (1829),²⁴ Ainsworth (1838)²⁵ Mignan (1930s),²⁶ and Clement (1866).

Rauwolf was considered the first European traveler passed through the High Road. He stayed two days in Kerkuk; he gave important information about the term Kurds, who he referred to as Curters.¹⁹ Jackson came from the south. Rolando described horribly the plague in Kerkuk and carefully the naphtha. Abu Talib Khan, who used the word Kirkoot, and de Beaujour who uses Kerkoud, came from the north. Ainsworth presented a detailed topographical description of the southern region of Kerkuk province and later on the northern parts. He presented only the Arabic (Abu Geger) and the Turkmen (Korkuk Baba) names of the eternal fire. Mignan came from the east and entered into the southern region of Kerkuk province. He passed through Kifri and Kara Tepe then left to Diyala province in the south. Clement's writing of Kerkuk is Kerkout.

Ali of Yazd used the name Kerkuk for the first time in 1425 saying that Timor passed through Tauk - Kerkuk - Altun Kopru to conquer the next regions.²⁷

"Timur s'embarqua & s'avança fur l'eau avec une extrême diligence, & lors. Qu'ayant passe par Toouc (a), il fut; arrivé a Carouc (b), les habitans en sortirent te vinrent- au devant de lu en grande cérémonie, & avec de sincères témoignages de respect & d'obéissance & Timur donna en Seigneurie perpétuelle cette. Place à l'Emir Ali Mouseli: Alors Czal Mirali Oirat, Pirali & Gèhanghir coururent se jetter aux pieds de l'Empereur pour l'assurer de leur soumission, les Princes de tous. ces quartiers-là, les Gouverneurs des Villes, principalement le Prince d'Altoun Cupruc allèrent aussi le trouver, il les reçût fort bien, il leur fit' donner des ceintures d'or & des vestes magnifiques, & leur donna aussi dé l'or, des pierreries & des étoffes pour leurs femmes & pour les trousseaux de leurs filles: Timur partit de l'ale quatrième de Sefer 769"

Rauwolf (1575) a writer and traveler, presents a little bit more information on Kerkuk region, without touching the population characteristics.¹⁹

"After the Sabbath of the Jews, my companions, was over, we went on again, and came the twenty sixth of December to Carcuck, a glorious fine city lying in a plain, in a very fertile country; at four miles distance is another that lieth on an ascent, whither we also travelled, my companions having business in both of them, and so we spent two days in them before we were ready to go on again" "Not far off from Tauk, we saw a very strong castle near unto a wood, that is guarded by a Turkish garrison"

Despite the lack of information on population, the use of Turkmen names of the cities by Ali of Yazd in the beginning of the 15th century, which are still used, refers to the presence of Turkmen in Kerkuk region at that time and even in advance: Tawuk (Tauk or Toouc) is located 45 km to the south of Kerkuk city and Altun Kopru (Altoun Cupruc) 45 km to the north. With some other Turkmen name of the towns in Kerkuk region, such as Kara Tepe, Kifri, these names are used by every traveler who visited the region.

Howel's (1789) transliteration for Kerkuk is Kircook. He entered Kerkuk region from the south and passed from the usual travel road which was also called High Way and saw the following inhabitations: Yengija, Deli Abbas, Kara Tepe, Kifri, Tuz Khurmatu, Tawuk, Tepeller, Kerkuk, Altun Kupri, Kus Tepe and Erbil. He mentioned that few Kurds are found in the towns with the Turks in these regions. What he means by the name Kurds should be also investigated.²⁸

"A few of them join the Turks in occupying the towns; but the greater number prefer a wandering, pastoral life"

Giuseppe Campanile (1810s) was in Mosul in 1802 for about a decade, he measured the inhabitants of Kerkuk as not Kurdish:²⁹

"Ou bien avec les étrangers qui ne savent pas le kurde, comme par exemple les gens de Bagdad, de Kirkuk, etc »

Buckingham (1816) portrayed the followings for the southern region of Kerkuk province:³⁰

"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. It consisted of many apartments, some of them having fire-places in the walls, like European chimneys ; others, with benches and niches, or recesses, for the accommodation of travelers, and all ornamented and vaulted, in the Turkish rather than the Arabic manner" "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"

Later, *Buckingham* continued talking about the same region:³¹

"Our afternoon was lounged away, without my seeing much of the town of Kara Tuppe. It appeared to me, to be hardly more than half the size of Kiffree, and the population still less in proportion; that of Kiffree being estimated at three thousand, while the inhabitants of this are thought not to exceed one thousand. The appearance and language of the people are as decidedly Turkish as the name of the place itself, and all seemed to confirm the opinion already expressed as to the common origin and progress of these halting-stations on the road"

Buckingham saw four Kurds in side Kerkuk city and determined the country of the Kurds as four days distance from Kerkuk:³²

"This was a large white shaggy animal, which had been brought by the Koords, who exhibited it, from the snow-clad mountains of their own country, at a distance of four days' journey to the eastward"

Ker Porter (1817 - 1820) arranged the ethnic composition of Kerkuk city as follows:³³

"The houses are packed together, and the bazars narrow and gloomy, though exhibiting every sort of merchandise and provision necessary for the comfort of the inhabitants. They are chiefly composed of Turks, Armenians, Gourds, Arabs, and a few Jews; and their number may amount to ten or twelve thousand"

Claudius James Rich (1821 – 1822)

The celebrated business agent, diplomat, traveler and antiquarian scholar Claudius James Rich can be considered among the most reliable and accurate sources of information about the geography and demography of northern Iraq in the early 19th century. He resided about half of his 33 years life in the Middle East and about 10 years in Iraq, of which six were spent in Baghdad. His travel in the Kurdish region, which lasted for about six months, is considered the first accurate knowledge from a scientific point of view on the subject of the topography and geography of the Kurdish region.³⁴ He provided the first regular information on these topics. He is considered the founding scholar of Mesopotamian archaeology and he discovered many important elements of the remains of ancient Babylon. His work proved to be a key to the translation of cuneiform script.³⁵ He knew

Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Persian, Syriac, and several modern European languages from boyhood. He was Fluent in Turkish and Arabic.

Rich presented important information on the population of the most of the regions which he visited. He portrayed the Kurdish regions and defined carefully the boundaries of what was called Kurdistan.

Rich enters Kerkuk region from the south to Kara Tepe village saying that:^{36, 37}
(Map 1)

"Kara Tepeh is peopled by Turcomans"

"The people of Karatepeh call themselves Turcomans, and Turkish is the only language used. There are some of the people called Ali Ulahees, Ismaelians, or Tcheragh Sonderans, residing here."

On his route Rich passed through the following locations and inhabitations, almost all of which still have Turkmen names; Kifri, Kör Dere, Kara Oğlan, Kız Kalası, Oniki İmam, Eski Kifri, Çemen, Bayat Plain, Kuru Çay, Kızıl Haraba, Aksu River, Yenijeh, Tuz Khurmatu, Çubuk, Demir Kapı, Tawuk, Kehriz, Tawuk Çayı, Ali Saray, Jumaila, Matara, Taze Khurmatu, Laylan and Kara Hasan. Then he entered the Sulaymaniya district.

After that he got to Kifri and said that it was about four hours from Ibrahim Khanjee, which he considered as the boundary of so-called Kurdistan. Without giving information on the population of Kifri he passed to the Bayat region saying:^{38 -40}

"At 7h left them, and entered the Beiat plain, which slopes down very gradually from the Kifri hills to the Tchemen" "Here was an encampment of the Beiat Turcomans" "Soon after eight we quitted the hills, and came into the large and finely cultivated plain occupied by the Beiat, a tribe of Turcomans who emigrated thus far from Khorassan"

Tuz Khurmatu was the next place of rest for Rich. The following is his description of this region:^{41, 42}

"We rode through gardens of date, orange, lemon, fig, apricot, pomegranate, and olive trees, which completely conceal the town" "The rest of the place is merely built of mud. The people are Turkish, and are mostly Ismaelians, or Tcheragh Sonderans"

"The mills in this region (Duz Hurmati) have each a little mud tower attached to it, in which to post a guard against thieves; all the places on the Kurdish border being very subject to inroads from robbers of that nation"

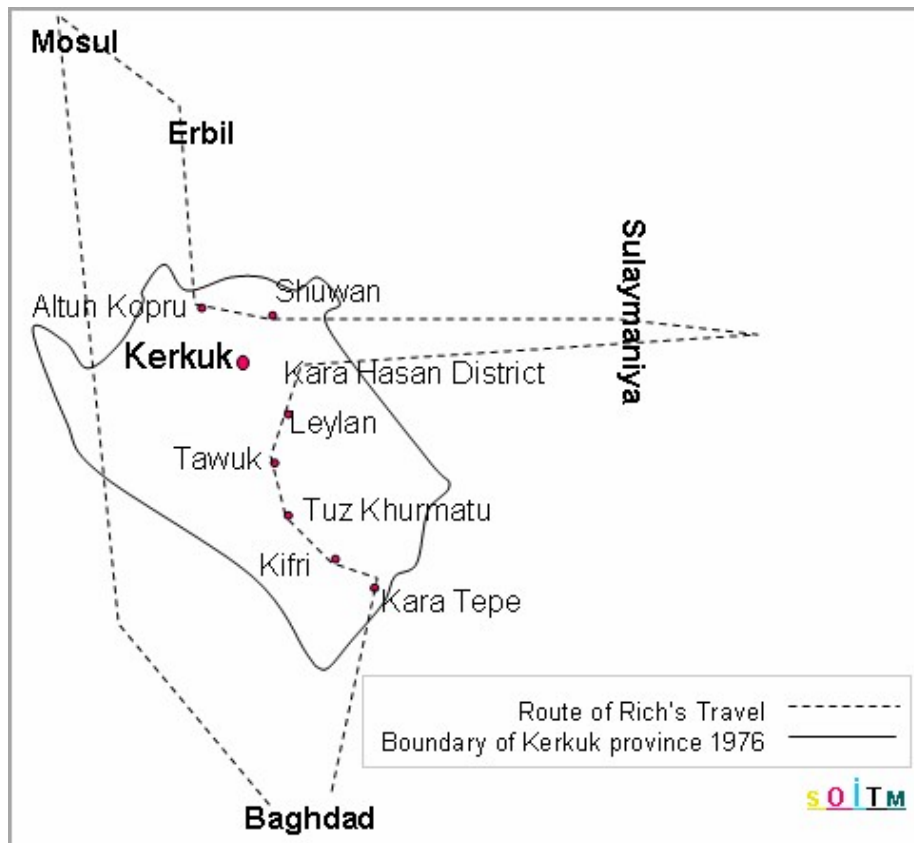
He phrased the plundering of Tawuk region by the Kurdish robbers as follows:⁴³

"He (Mohammed Aga of Mahmood pasha of Sulaymaniya) was the officer who last year commended the detachment which took and plundered this village, when Mahmood Pasha was leagued with the king of Persia's son, the Shahzadeh of Kermanshah, against the Turks; and the poor villagers seemed anxious to propitiate him, in case of another such visit. Many came and kissed his hand; but the moment his back was turned, exclaimed, "May he never see good luck; he was the fellow who stripped us last year!"

Rich continued his voyage to the region of Tawuk without commenting on the nature of the population passed to the Leylan region which is 15 km toward southern east of Kerkuk city. He states:⁴⁴

"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 neighboring villages are of Turkmen race".

He turned eastwards and passed through the plain of Kara Hasan entering Sulaymaniya province through the district of Chamchamal:⁴⁵



Map 1, Sketch of the travel route of Claudius James Rich at 1820

"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".

In his return route from Sulaymaniya Rich passed through the villages of Shaikh Weisi, Ghezalan, Ghulumkuva, Ghuilkowa, Kafar, Gok Dere, Omer Beg Koyu, Kizbir and Altun Kopru. Then he left for Erbil province.

Before entering the Kerkuk province through Shuwan region, Rich visited a Turkmen village in the plains of Bazian, which has now completely disappeared.⁴⁶

"The inhabitants of all the villages we passed were out gathering cotton, which was a very pleasant, cheerful and even novel sight, as, except on occasions like the present, the roads are very still and solitary throughout the East. 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 described Shuwan region as not Kurdish and out of the term Kurdistan:⁴⁷

"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"

He went through the western part of Shuwan district toward the region of Altun Kopru describing it as not inhabited with Kurdish peoples and not within Kurdistan land:⁴⁸

"We mounted again at half past eight. The country now was rather less cut up, or at least not to that great depth; and 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"

Unexpectedly, the people of some villages in this region were described by Rich as extremist Shiites. He does not mention their ethnicity. Here Rich used the term Tcheragh Sonderans, which are Turkmen words and used for Turkmen Alevites (an extremist Shiite sect). The Shiites in Kerkuk region are almost all Turkmen and exclusively found in the south of Kerkuk province.

Fraser in 1834 came from Tebriz and passed through southern part of Kerkuk province. He presented almost the same description as Buckingham about the Kifri district of the south of Kerkuk province:^{49, 50}

"The Change in the customs and aspect of the people, confirmed the fact that 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"

"The date trees rising above the walls, the first we had seen, proclaimed our entry into Arabestan; and the change in the costume and aspect of the people, confirmed the fact that we were now with in the Turkish dominions"

In another voyage *Fraser* (1842) came from the north and passed through Altun Kopru, Kerkuk, Tuz Khurmatu, Kifri and Kara Tepe without presenting information about the nature of population.⁵¹

In 1836 *Shiel* entered Kerkuk region from the north and from Kerkuk city he went to Sulaymaniya in the east. His presentation of the ethnic composition of Kerkuk city was as follows:⁵²

"The inhabitants are Arabs and Osmànlis, with some Christians and Jews, but no Kurds"

Southgate (1840) came from Baghdad and crossed Kerkuk province through the usual high way. It seems that he is the only traveler who mentioned Tisin, at the time a village of Kerkuk which is a neighborhood now. Southgate presented important information on the Turkmen nature of a large region in Iraq. This may be the bases on which today's map of Turkmeneli is constructed:⁵³

"A large part of the Mohammedan population between Bagdad and Mosul is not, however, originally Arab or Chaldean, but Turkish. Their language is Turkish, and they call themselves Turcomans. May they not be remnants of those Tartar hordes which poured into this country in the invasion of Hologou?"

Moroni (1846) in his dictionary arranged the components of Kerkuk population as follows:⁵⁴

"E difesa da una forte cittadella posta sopra una scoscesa altura, ai cui piedi scorre il Kerkuk-soui. Una delle moschee è osservabile, perchè dicesi contenere il sepolcro di Daniele e de'suoi compagni, non permettendo i turchi che la visitino gli ebrei. Vi sono turchi, armeni, nestoriani e kurdi"

Kerkuk in the first half of the 20th century

Kerkuk by the officers of the British Mandate

Almost all the administrative units of the modern Iraqi state were built by the British after the First World War. Besides large numbers of Iraqis in every administrative field (including justice, economy, industry, education, health.. etc), tens of the English military and political officers worked for decades to institute the governmental structures of the new Iraqi state and to guard English interests. Despite that these Britons were politically minded, their publications can be considered as being relatively reliable sources. These include important information about the Turkmen nature of the region. Edmonds and Lyon lived in Iraq 3 decades; the former worked in Kerkuk two and half years, the second more than 1 year. Longrigg, Soane and Hay worked in Iraq for several years.

E. B. Soane, an intelligence British officer visited Kerkuk before occupation in 1908 mentioned:⁵⁵

"Kirkuk is famous for Turkomans, fruit, and crude oil, all of which abound. The town, which must have a population of at least 15,000, is one of the trilingual towns of the Kurdistan borders"

"Itself a Turkoman town, to its south and west are nomad Arabs, and to its east the country of the Hamavand Kurds"

"Turkish power is very evident here. Being near to Bagdad—seven days and possessing a Turkish-speaking population, it is in a position to supply a large number of youths to the military schools"

"The Chaldean settlement is of considerable antiquity, having migrated here, according to their own traditions, during the time of Alp Arslan, in the 11th century. If Kirkuk is, as the natives assert, a remnant of the Seljuq kings, this is possible, and perhaps even probable. Unlike the Chaldeans of Mosul, they have not forgotten the Syriac character, and while they speak only Turkish, employ these characters in writing among themselves"

Despite that Edmonds imposed the Kurdish nature on Kerkuk province and largely ignores that of the Turkmen and Arab, the realities forced him to present important information on the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk city. Relating to the population nature of Kerkuk city in the early 1920s, he says the following:⁵⁶

"The population at the time which I am writing numbered perhaps about 25,000, of whom the great majority was Turkmen and about one-quarter Kurds, with smaller colonies of Arab, Christians and Jews".

The Turkmen nature of Tuz Khurmatu, (which was considered one of the largest of Kerkuk's districts before detachment in 1976), and the villages around it, were indirectly described by Edmonds as Turkmen. He mentioned:⁵⁷

"He proved to be Shaikh Hasan, head of the Dol Pamu branch of the Barzinja family, who, though to all outward appearance an orthodox Sunni, was accepted as their Spiritual Guide by the unorthodox Qizilbash inhabitants of Tuz Khurmatu and other Turkoman villages near the High Way in Kirkuk liwa"

The followings are another oblique way by which Edmonds seems to be forced to admit the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk city:^{58, 59}

"Kirkuk remained an important garrison town and, for reasons of Language and the racial composition of the population, an important recruiting centre or civil servants and gendarmes on 'whom the Ottoman administration could rely"

"The administrative status of Kirkuk was very different from that of Sulaimani. Although the liwa had not yet acceded to Faisal's kingdom it was being administered almost exactly as if it had, except that Turkish was still being used not only for local purposes but also in communications with Baghdad, that all the civil servants were local men (of whom there was no dearth in this cradle of Ottoman officials), and that the Iraqi flag was not flown over the serai"

The Large district Kara Tepe, of the Kifri district which was also detached from Kerkuk province in 1976, was clearly presented by Longrigg as Turkmen:⁶⁰

"An operation by the 13th and 14th division late November ended with the seizure of the Saqaltutan Pass on the Jabal Hamrin and the Turkmen Town of Qara tepe in the Kifri plain"

The political officer of Erbil province from 1918 to 1920 is another source of information. He emphasized the Turkmen nature of several important regions also out of the Kerkuk province. Hay listed the Turkmen towns, and stressed the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk city and villages around it as follows:⁶¹

"Starting with the Nebi Yunis (the tomb of the Prophet Jonah) on the bank of the Tigris opposite Mosul, and running down through Arbil, Altun Keupri, Kirkuk, Kifri, and Qizil Robot to Mandali, we find a line of towns with Turkish-speaking inhabitants. It is practically the same line which divides predominantly Kurdish from predominantly Arab territory. Kirkuk is the main centre of this Turkish population, and before the war possessed 30,000 inhabitants. Several villages in its vicinity are also Turkish speaking, whereas the other towns are isolated communities surrounded by Kurds and Arabs"

On another occasions he said:^{62, 63}

"Kirkuk and Arbil, especially the former, provided large numbers of officials to the Turkish Government, who favored them owing to their knowledge of the State language"

"The only two places with a Turkish-speaking population which concern us closely are Arbil and Altun Keupri"

Hay is considered from the rare sources which presented information on one of the Turkmen regions in Diyala province. He resided in Mendeli for 6 months. He says:⁶⁴

"Mandali in fact was an ideal training ground. Four languages were current in the district, and most of the townsmen could speak all four. As children they learnt their mother tongue, Turkish, from their parents, and the local Kurdo-Lurish dialect from their nurses and the people of the hills, whither they were sent for the hot weather. Subsequently they acquired Arabic from the men who tended their date-gardens, and Persian from the merchants who visited their town and became guests in their houses"

For the same town, Keppel in 1824 presented the followings:⁶⁵

"Not many weeks before we saw this Moolah, he was one of the principal persons of Mendali, a Turkish town near the frontier. In those days he was the bosom friend of Davoud Pasha, "his best of cut-throats" and most willing instrument of assassination"

On several occasions Lyon's information contradicts that of Edmonds on the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk city. Relating to the most important notable of Kerkuk, Edmonds presented the Kurdish tribal family Talabani and their poet Sheikh Riza, while Lyon presented four Turkmen families and a Turkmen poet as the prominent families of Kerkuk. Lyon did not include neither Talabani family nor their poet in between Kerkuk notables.⁶⁶

"There were four main families of notables in Kirkuk - the Naftchizadas, Qirdars, Aouchis and Ya'qubizadas. The first, headed by Husain Beg, were an old Turkish family which had the local oil concession. The Qirdars, headed by Haji Jemil, a much revered and astute old gentleman, were wealthy merchants, cousins of the Mayor of Istanbul. Haji Hassan Effendi Aouchi, head of his family, an ex-mudir and a keen farmer, had spent a large fortune making an irrigation canal on his land in the Hawija plain bordering the Lesser Zab River. His sons were great sportsmen and fully upheld the family name Aouchi, which in Turkish means hunter.

The Yaqubizadas were municipal officials with considerable property in the city. They had retreated from Kirkuk with the British and so cast in their lot on our side and Mejid Effendi was Mayor of the city. All four families were solid reliable Turkish stock, and after the war their leadership and support was a most stabilizing factor in local government"

On the Turkmen regions in the north of Iraq Lyon presented the followings:⁵

"The country between Kifri and Kirkuk and onwards to Arbil, Mosul and across the Turkish boundary to the north consists of rolling steppes, bounded on the right or east by the Kurdish foothills and on the left by the Tigris. It is intersected by many watercourses, including the Greater and Lesser Zab Rivers; and along the road to Mosul and onwards to Turkey are numerous villages inhabited by people of Turkish origin speaking the Turkish tongue, who are quite distinct from the people on either side"

On the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk city, he said:⁶⁷

"Then came Kirkuk, mostly Turkish, which had held out against all Arab blandishments and refused him, but nevertheless was under the Iraqi administration and in any case was situated on the return route to the capital Baghdad"

Lyon clearly and openly stressed the Turkmen nature of the Kerkuk city:⁶⁸

"Kirkuk city was not without its culture - Turkish and proud of it" "The Kurdish struggle for independence had been a constant source of trouble in Turkey and Persia and the conservative Turkish culture of Kirkuk was likewise suspect in Iraq, a country newly torn out of the old Turkish Empire"

Kerkuk by some Expert authorities

Toward the end of the 19th century *Vital cuinet*, a French geographer that was charged to survey areas and count their population, presented the population number of the communities in Kerkuk central district, which included the city and the sub-districts and villages annexed to it as follows:⁶⁹

“La population du chef-lieu et ses environs est de 30.000 habitants suit:
Turkmen: 28.000
Chaldeens: 400
Israelites: 1600”

The *commission of the league of the nations*, which had extensively studied the demography of Kerkuk region in 1924, presented important information on the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk region. Under the heading “The Turkish Character of Kerkuk and other towns along the High Way” Commission’s report stated:⁷⁰

“It is obvious, however, that the basis stock of the population of these towns along what is known as the “high-road” is Turkish. The leading men are Turkish. We may mention that even the Christians of Kerkuk speak Turkish among themselves. At Kerkuk the only newspaper which appears - twice weekly - under Government control, is printed in Turkish. Official Acts are published in Turkish and Arabic. The British political officer knows Turkish but speaks neither Arabic nor Kurdish. Turkish is spoken all along the high-road in all localities of any importance. The little town of Altun Kopru is definitely Turkish. The population of Tuz Khurmatu is, except for a few Jewish families, entirely Turkish or Turkmen. We estimate the population of Qara Tepe to be 75 per cent Turkish, 22 per cent Kurd, and 3 per cent Arab. Taza Khnrmatli and Tauq are also mainly Turkish. As regards the population of the villages in the neighborhood of these towns, the Turks constitute only a scattered minority.

Razzuq Isa, an Iraqi author, in his volume “The geography of Iraq” published in 1922, considered the Turkmen as the first component of Kerkuk city and Malha (West) and Tawuk (North) sub-districts. He regarded Turkish as the major language of Kerkuk city and he said that the poets in Kerkuk write in Turkish. The population of Kifri district, Kara Tepe and Tuz Khurmatu was estimated by him as predominantly Turkmen. However, he unexpectedly described the population of the Altun Kopru Sub-district as predominantly Kurds and no Turkmen.⁷¹

Taha baker al-Hashimi is an Iraqi historian; his book “The Geography of Iraq” was approved by the Iraqi Ministry of Education to be studied in secondary schools in 1929. In the section on Kerkuk province, he considers the majority in the province to be Turkmen:⁷²

“The population of the province according to the estimation of the year 1920 was 92.000, of which the majority are Turks”

Al-Daftari in his book, “The Iraqi North” published in 1954 considered the Turkmen as the first component of Kerkuk city.⁷³

Talking on the early decades of the 20th century, the English Air minister CBT *Thomson* mentioned:⁷⁴

“Thence, in the course of the afternoon, to Kerkuk, a Turcoman city and the seat of the Chaldean archbishop, where we spent the night ...”

The English peerage *Hoare* said:⁷⁵

“In less than an hour we were at Kirkuk, a place that is mainly Turcoman”

American traveler *Warfield* described Kerkuk of the early 19th century as distinctly Turkish.⁷⁶

“Turks and Arabs never did get on well together and Kerkuk is distinctly Turkish”

The American scholar of Near Eastern cultures, *O'Shea*, mentioned: ⁷⁷

"Of cities such as Kirkuk, in which Kurdish inhabitants were the minority"

Gordon who worked out of the Baghdad in the 1930s mentioned that Kerkuk is a Turkish speaking city. ⁷⁸

"There are some Turcoman villages, while the city of Kerkuk (eclipsed in size only by Baghdad, Basra and Mosul) is Turkish speaking.

The *Encyclopedia of Islam*, which was updated between 1913 and 1936, is the standard encyclopedia of the academic discipline of Islamic studies. Its section on Kerkuk stated: ⁷⁹

"Turkmen are the predominant element in the city. It considers the city as bulwark of the Ottoman Empire and a center of its culture"

Liora Lukitz, a research fellow for several years at the Centre for Middle East Studies at Harvard University, clearly confirm the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk city: ⁸⁰

"The Kerkuklis made their participation in the electoral process conditional on four provisos: (1) non-interference of the government in the electoral procedures; (2) the preservation of the Turkish character in the Liwa;s administration; (3) the recognition of Turkish as the Liwa's official language; and (4) the appointment of Kerkuklis in all cabinets to be formed in Baghdad thereafter.

In a telegram in Turkish sent in July 1923, the Prime Minister, 'Abd el Muhsin al Sa'dun, confirmed the Council of ministers' acceptance of the conditions two and three"

She determines the important regions populated by Turkmen in Kerkuk province: ⁸¹

"Those borders left the districts of Arbil, Altin Kopru, Kirkuk and Kifri (Inhabited mostly by Turkmen) outside the area in which the Kurds predominated"

Batatu's work on Iraq is widely considered the pre-eminent study of the modern Iraqi history, ⁸² his description for the city of Kerkuk is: ⁸³

"Kerkuk, an oil center, lying 180 miles north of Baghdad, had been Turkish through and through in the not too distant past. By degrees, Kurds moved into the city from the surrounding villages. With the growth of the oil industry, their migration intensified. By 1959, they had swollen to more than one third of the population, and the Turkmen had declined to just over half, the Assyrians and Arabs accounting, in the main, for the rest of the total of 120,000."

The western region of Kerkuk province, which was exposed to severe demographical changes, was described by *Batatu* as owned by the Turkmen: ⁸⁴

"The Turkmen owned much of the agricultural country in the Malhab region, along the lesser Zab and in the western outskirts of Kerkuk, but their ploughs and sheep were tended by Arabs".

David McDowall, a distinguished scholar and a specialist on minorities in the Middle East presents valuable information on the Turkmen regions in Kerkuk province, particularly on the Turkmen nature of Kerkuk region: ⁸⁵⁻⁸⁸

"Kerkuk City had a large Turkmen population as recently as 1958"

"The Turkmen Towns on the edges of the Mesopotamian plain, most probably Erbil and Kerkuk"

"Finally an autonomous Southern Kurdistan excluding Kerkuk, Altun Kopru and Arbil where the largest urban communities were Turkmen"

"Tension had been growing for some time between Turkmen, the originally predominant element (of Kerkuk city), and Kurds who had settled during the 1930s and 1940s, driven from the land by landlord rapacity and drawn by the chance for employment in the burgeoning oil industry. By 1959 half the populations of 150,000 were Turkmen, rather less than half were Kurds and the balance Arabs, Assyrians and Armenians."

McDowall shed light on Kurdish obstinate attempts to take over Kerkuk region:^{85, 89}

"Few Kurds would claim quite as much today, but would still claim the city of Kerkuk, even though it had a larger Turkmen population as recently as 1958"

"When the government proposed to apply the 1957 census to Kerkuk, Mulla Mustafa refused it, since this was bound to show that the Turkmen, although outnumbered in the province as a whole, were still predominant in Kerkuk town"

Professor Phebe Marr a retired prominent historian of modern Iraq. She was research professor at the National Defense University and a professor of history at the University of Tennessee and at Stanislaus State University in California considers Turkmen the leading family of Kerkuk city and she says that many Kurds migrated into Kerkuk city:⁹⁰

"Kirkuk, the Communists reckoned, would be an ideal location for the intimidation of their enemies. The leading families in the city were Turcoman. They formed a well-educated, relatively conservative group of upper- and middle-class bureaucrats, merchants, landowners, and businessmen. The town was also inhabited by a substantial number of Kurds, many of whom had migrated there to work for the oil company as laborers. The Kurds would form a good base of support for the Communists, as many belonged to, or sympathized with, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), which was allied with the Communist Party. As the headquarters of the oil company, Kirkuk also had a large concentration of workers, who could be mobilized by the Communists as during the earlier Kirkuk episode in 1946"

In a recent article, Prof. Odisho, a Christian native of Kerkuk describes Kerkuk as follows:⁹¹

"Some of their (Turkmen) early settlements were and still are along the highway from Baghdad to Kirkuk and then to Mosul including Qara Tapa, Kifri, Tuz Khurmatu, Tauq, Kirkuk, Altun Kopru, Arbil, Tell Afar. Their largest population concentration is in the city of Kirkuk whose linguistics, cultural and ethnic identity is distinctly colored by their presence". "The Turkomans, as a larger native community, rarely acquired the languages of the smaller ethnic groups such as Assyrians and Armenians except in certain isolated cases when certain Turkomani families or individuals lived among or settled adjacent to the Assyrian and Armenian settlements or socialized with them through employment or friendship" "On different occasions in the elementary school, class presentations were conducted in Turkomani"

The Kurds in Kerkuk

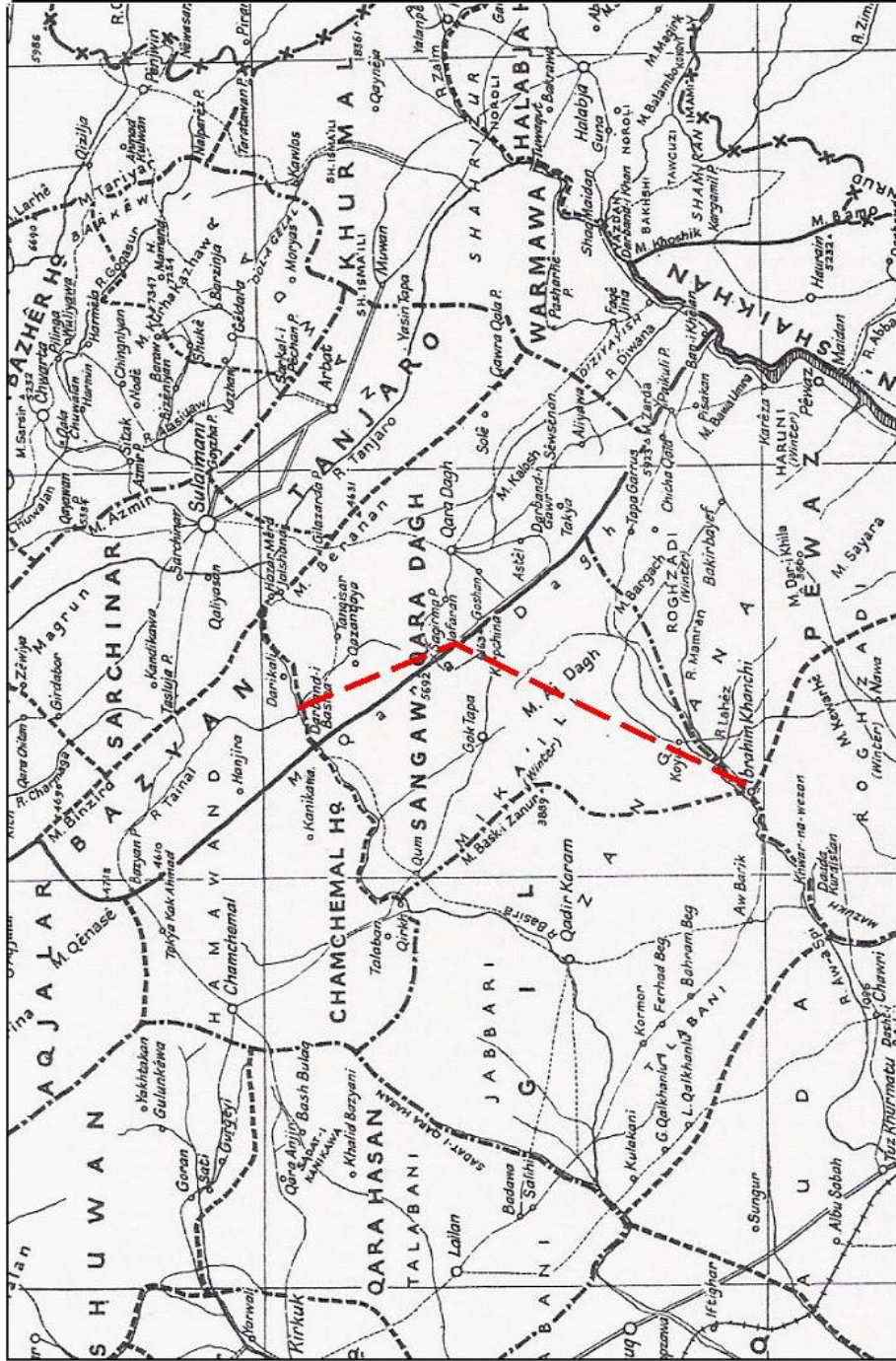
After presenting the Turkmen existence in Kerkuk region from the Turkmen point of view, it would be unwise if the Kurdish presence in the province is not discussed. Western publications, even some academic studies, particularly of the latter half century have increasingly made the Kurds the historical owners and the predominant inhabitants of Kerkuk as a city and as a province.⁹² To analyze the Kurdish relation with Kerkuk region, the terms Kurds and Kurdistan should be discussed.

The Term Kurds

The use of term Kurds dates back to the second century BCE, which was first applied to Seleucid or Parthian mercenary dwelling in the Zagros. McDowall asserts that this term certainly had a socio-economic rather than ethnic meaning until the 19th century.⁹³

"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 and probably also of the tribes that acknowledged the Sassanians in Mesopotamia, many of which must have been Semitic in origin"

By basing his theory on linguistic and historical data, Minorsky has decided to classify the Kurds with the Iranian peoples without taking account of the complexity of racial strains which they incorporated.



Map 2, the western boundaries of Kurdistan (red line) which was given by Rich Edmonds entitled "Parts of the Liwas Kerkuk and Sulaymani" from the "Kurds, Turks and Arabs"

It is not clear when the term *Kurd* acquired the meaning *Persian nomad* in addition to the first meaning. Morony mentions:⁹⁴

"All of the nonPersian, tribal, pastoral, Iranian groups in the foothills and mountains of the Zagros range along the eastern fringes of Iraq were called Kurds at that time"

The socio-economic meaning of the term *Kurds* can also be frequently found in the 36 volumes of the history of celebrated Arabic Historian al-Tabari.⁹⁵

"According to Ibn Humayd Salamah Muhammad b. Ishaq al-Hasan b. Dinar Layth b. Abi Sulaym Mujahid I recited this verse before Abdallah b. Umar and said, He said, Do you know, O Mujahid, who it was that advised burning Abraham in fire? I answered, "No." He said, one of the nomads of Persia. I said "O Abd al-rahman, do the Persian have nomads? He answered, yes, the Kurds are the nomads of Persia, and it was one of them who advised burning Abraham in fire"

The same meaning was presented by the celebrated Islamic historians, Masudi and Hamawi. The term *Kurds* maintained the same meaning until recently in the 19th century:⁹⁶

"At the time of the Islamic conquests, the term Kurd had meant nomad. From the eleventh century onwards many travelers and historians treated the term 'Kurd' as synonymous with brigandage, a view echoed by nineteenth-century European travelers. By the middle years of the nineteenth century 'Kurd' was also used to mean tribes people who spoke the Kurdish language"

McDowall supports this claim by mentioning that the Kurds has no common ancestry and the Kurdish civic culture,⁹⁷ shared language and established literature started to develop only in the beginning of the 20 century.⁶⁵ Marr, too, supports the idea that the sense of ethnic and national identity of the Kurds developed in 20th century.⁹⁸

Definition of the term *Kurds* by Marco Polo in the 13th century supports the idea that the term *Kurds* was not used as an ethnic term:⁹⁹

"Among its (Mosul's) mountains are people called Kurds, who are Nestorian and Jacobite Christians, but some are Saracens, and reverence Mohammed. They are an overbearing and wicked people, ever ready to rob the merchants"

Rauwalf also used the original Turkmen name of the town Tauk. He considered the Kurds as Nestorians and spoke no Persian, which definitely referred to different Kurds from that of today. Almost the same definition as Polo was given by Rauwolf three centuries later, in the 1570s:¹⁹

"Not far off from Tauk, we saw a very strong castle near unto a wood, that is guarded by a Turkish garrison: This is situated in the province of the Curters, which beginneth there, and lieth between Media and Mesopotamia, all along the river Tigris and reacheth to Armenia. These Curters, which are almost all Nestorians, speak a peculiar language, which was unknown to my fellow-travelers, wherefore they could not speak to them in the Persian nor Turkish language, which is spoke all along from Baghdad through Assyria, in the confines of two potent monarchs, to that place."

The Term Kurdistan

Despite the fact that the term *Kurdistan* has been in use since the 14th century, its definition faces important practical difficulties based on:

- The obscurity of the term *Kurd* until the recent past.^{100 - 102}

"Although many travelers have passed through Kurdistan and there are a large number of important works dealing with the Kurds from the linguistic, historical, ethnographical and political point of view, we still lack a general study devoted to this people"

- The word *Kurd* did not refer to an ethnic or linguistic community until recently.⁹³

- The word *Kurdistan* has never referred to a state with an independent administrative system.
- It always included a mixed population.¹⁰³

"Whatever may have been the geographical application of the term "Kurdistan", it is evident that it has nothing to do with the actual dissemination of Kurdish people"

Before 16th century, the term *Kurdistan* was almost absent from the historical manuscripts other than that of the Hamd Allah Mustawfi's texts of the 14th century. It is worth noting that Turkmen and Kurds formed the majority of Mustawfi's *Kurdistan*.¹⁰⁴ Referring to Mustawfi, Le Strange presented the following data:¹⁰⁵ (Map 1, 2)

"As regard the origin of the Kurdistan province, it is stated that about the middle of the 6th (12th) century Sultan Sanjar divided of the western part of the Jibal Province, namely the region which was dependent on Kermanshah and giving it the name Kurdistan"

The first Governor of this province was Sulayman Shah who appointed Bahar as the Capital. The Mongol sultan Oljay built a new capital for the province and called it Chamchamal (Mongol word?).¹⁰⁶ At that time, the north eastern mountainous region of the present Iraq was shared between al-Jazira in the west and Azerbaijan in the east, by a frontier line running from the east of the Amadiya and Erbil.¹⁰⁷ (Map 3) Tawuk, which was a more populous than Kerkuk at that time, and Kerkuk were located in al-Jazira province.¹⁰⁸

Ali of Yazd, who used the word Kerkuk for the first time in the early 15th century, put Kerkuk and Tawuk in Mesopotamia.²⁷ The Italian ambassadors to the Uzun Hassan of the White Sheep Empire are considered from the important first-hand sources of the information about the region in the second half of the 15th century. They talked in detail about the geography and demography of southeast Turkey and northwest Iran with out mentioning the term *Kurdistan*.¹⁰⁹

The term started to appear in the registers of the Ottomans Empire only in the third decade of the 16th century, describing an area below the lake of Van.¹¹⁰ The Eastern frontier of this *Kurdistan* ran just to the west of Bitlis passing obliquely to the south east excluding Nisibin, Mardin and Mosul, including only the Amadiye region of Iraq.

The first hand sources that deal with the term *Kurdistan* in the 17th century were the *Sharafname* of Sharaf al-Din of Bitlis, which was published in 1597, and *Seyahatname* of Evliya Celebi written in mid 17th century. Both presented hugely expanded frontiers for the *Kurdistan* region. Evliya's map, who succeeded Bitlisi by several decades and possibly read his texts, is almost a copy of the map of *Sharafname*. The *Kurdistan* of these two authors include Malatya and extended to Baghdad and then to Basra, which is considered one of the unbelievable characteristics of these two maps.¹¹¹ The other factor which undermines the Chelebi's authority to make a decision on the Kurdish regions in Iraq is that he took the road along the Tigris in his travel in Iraq,¹¹² which was considerably far from the Kurdish region and from the regions which he included in his *Kurdistan*.

Garzoni, who lived in Mosul for 28 years,¹¹³ and the accurate Niebuhr in 1760s, who was there for a scientific expedition,⁹⁹ are almost the two most important scholars and first hand sources who had carefully described the region, and presented an inclusive description of the term *Kurdistan* in the 18th century.

Garzoni divided the region called *Kurdistan* in to five principalities: Bitlis, Giulamerk, Amadia, Djezira and Kara Djiolan. Erbil was excluded and Shahrizur and Kerkuk are considered two independent principalities governed by Mutasellims.¹¹³

Niebuhr in his voyage included Mardin and Diyarbakir in Mesopotamia. He described Kurdistan as follows:⁹⁹

"Kurdistan, which formed the northern part of the ancient Assyria, is a mountainous-region to the eastward of the Tigris, and immediately at the back of Mosul, Nisibin, and Mardin. The inhabitants for the most part speak a corrupt dialect of Persian".

Ker Porter's description of Kerkuk regions included different inaccurate information. When he entered the well known and historical Turkmen Bayat region at the southern part of Kerkuk province; he called them Kayyat and wrongly considered them Kurdish tribes.¹¹⁴

"the people of this tract are a mixture of Arabs and Kurds, the former are from al-Abaid and al Jarba Arab Tribes and the later of Kayyat Tribes (2000 Hours men) their villages are large and extends in every direct over this extensive plain. It opened at once upon us with every cultivated and busy appearance, the prosperity of ever active Kayyat people"

He put Kerkuk in the lower Kurdistan, later on; he contradicted himself and pointed to Derband at about 70 kilometer at the east of Kerkuk city as the gate of Kurdistan.^{115, 116}

"Kirkook is regarded as one of the most considerable places in Lower Courdistan; which, extending from the north-western frontiers of Klmzistan, to the high mountainous passes of Courdistan, (the ancient Carduchia,) comprehends almost the whole of Assyria Proper"

"After 2 days, we now took a direction S. E. and 2 miles brought us to the gate of Kurdistan or the west Derband"

The celebrated *Rich* gave almost an exact definition of the boundaries of what was called Kurdistan and the regions populated by the Kurds. He determined three locations on the Far East of Kerkuk province as the boundaries of Kurdistan (Map 2): Derband, Sagirma and Ibrahim Kanja.¹¹⁷

"At 9 A.M. we arrived at the pass of Derbent, the approach to which is very marshy, and must be troublesome in winter. A small khan stands on the right hand, and just at the mouth of the pass is a square ruin or platform, with the remains of little vaulted cells in it, and some wells of water. This resembles the platform at Kasr i Shireen, and Haoush Kerek; and is undoubtedly, like them, Sassanian, For curiosity's sake I asked the guard at Derbent by whom he thought it was constructed, and he answered without hesitation "By Khosrou". The pass of Derbent is formed by a mere ridge, or wall, which advances as it were to close the valley, and slopes down very gradually, leaving but a small opening. This is a complete screen, facing the two sides of the opening through which the road to Koordistan leads"

In another occasion he reported:¹¹⁸

This part of the Koordish ranges of mountains, as they appeared from the mount of Tchemtchemal. The line which we see immediately before us, extending from N. to S. E., is a narrow precipitous bare ridge, which is called the Bazian Mountains. To the north of the pass of Derbent i Bazian, which, as I have already remarked, is just before us, the mountains soon make a turn towards the west, where they form the mountains called Khalkhalan, which bound the Pashalik of Keuy I^anjak on the south.

To the south of the pass of Derbent, the ridge is continued in a straight line south and a little east. Here is another pass called Derbent i Bastcrra; beyond which the ridge, continuing in the same line, assumes the name of Karadagh, and becomes well wooded. Here is the third road into Koordistan from the plains of Assyria. It is called the Seghirmeh, or ladder, and passing directly over the crest of the mountain, has been esteemed difficult, if not impossible, for an army.

Rich appointed Ibrahim Kanja and Ghilli as the location between the Kurdish and Turkish boundaries in Kifiri region:¹¹⁹

"Just behind this part, that is E. of it, appears a higher summit, belonging to I know not what range, which is part of the district of Dilleo. Just before, or W. of the high part, which to appearance forms the termination of the Zenghaneh range, are little hills, scarcely discernible; where is Ibrahim Khanjee, and Ghilli on the Turkish frontier. Still farther W., the Kifri and Toozkhoormattee line of hills"

Rich estimated the distance between Kifri and the boundaries of so-called Kurdistan as 27 miles and nine hours on horse. He excluded even the northern east region of Kerkuk from the boundaries of Kurdistan. He considered Shuwan region as not Kurdish land but inhabited with the Kurds.⁴⁷ He appointed the northern region of Kerkuk as neither inhabited with Kurds nor as Kurdish land.⁴⁸

Rich's data limited the southern and western boundaries of what was called Kurdistan in the early 19th century to the boundaries of the province of Sulaymaniya of 1976 and held Kerkuk province of 1976 entirely out of the term of *Kurdistan*. The data refer indirectly to the massive Kurdish emigration to the Turkmen lands in the not too distant past. This supports the statement of H. Batatu.⁸³

Mignan who visited Kifri region about a decade after Rich, relocate the boundary in this region toward Kifri.²⁶

"The Koords are not very particular in regard to the limits of their boundary lines; but the neighborhood of Kifri, to which town we were proceeding, is considered by them as the south-eastern frontier of their country"

Fraser in his volume "Mesopotamia and Assyria" talked about two Kurdistan, the Persian Kurdistan and that of Assyria. He uses term *Kurdistan* several times giving information on its location on only two occasions.¹²⁰

"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. The very remarkable community of Nestorian Christians, who inhabit the vicinity of Mount Jewar, may also be considered as more properly appertaining to this province than to Persian Kurdistan, as the waters from that elevation certainly flow into the Tigris"

Fraser, like Rich, appointed to the Sagirma as the pass into the Kurdistan region:¹²¹

"The pass (deep note: That of Sugramah) is very striking. The mountains, of which I have spoken as forming the boundary between the highlands of Kurdistan and the plain of Assyria, which extends to the Tigris, here form a line running about southeast and northwest, and are composed of many strata of limestone and calcareous conglomerate, with intervening beds of gravel and indurated sandstone"

Ainsworth realized the ongoing inaccurate use of the term *Kurdistan* and gave the most correct diagnoses. In the 1830s he said:¹²²

"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. of the outlying ranges of hills in either of these Pashaliks as forming part of Kurdistan. Jezireh Zakho and Koi Sanjak, like 'Amadiyah and 'Suleimaniyeh, are in the hills"

Mignan, in Kifri in 1930s, defined the Kurdish boundaries as follows:²⁶

"Here the authority of Sooleyman Pasha of Koordistaun ceased, to give place to that of the Turkish government, in the person of a zabit, who received his credentials from the powerful Daoud, pasha of Baghdad.

Clement in 1856 further displaced the boundaries of Kurdistan toward Kerkuk city, but excluded the city from what is called Kurdistan:^{123, 124}

"Kerkout, chef-lieu du pachalik de Chehrèzour, est situé à l'extrême limite orientale du désert sur le versant Sud de la première colline qu'on doit franchir pour pénétrer dans le Kourdistan"

"Nous restâmes deux jours entiers à Kerkout que nous quittâmes le 15 pour entrer dans le Kourdistan par des routes non battues, mais seulement indiquées par des indigènes"

Clement unexpectedly contradicting almost all the other travelers of the same period and considering three fourth of the city's population as Kurdish:¹²⁵

"La population de Kerkout, ville haute, ville basse et faubourg, non compris les soldats de la garnison, est d'environ vingt-cinq mille ames dont les trois quarts sont Kourdes. Le gouverneur Ali Pacha savait se faire respecter et aimer, par son energie, ses idees liberales et sa bonte. Il avait toujours aupres de lui un superbe pelican blanc qui la vie des voyageurs de distinction qui traversent le pays, il a fallu des lois serveres qui sont devenues comme des traditions sacrees"

The same estimation was given by Şemseddin Sami in his book called *Kamus iil-Alam*.

History of the Kurdish presence in Kerkuk

It is clearly seen that the Kurds of the 16th century and before were not the Kurds of today. Therefore, it would be illogic to discuss the Kurdish existence in Kerkuk region at those eras. Istakhrai and Ibn Hawqal named the Kurds as the principle nomads.¹²⁶ The Kurds by Tabari, Masudi and Hamawi denoted the cultivators, nomads, tribes and other socioeconomic groups. The Kurds of Polo in 13th century included all the religious and ethnic groups⁹⁹ and the Kurds of Rauwalf in 16th century were all Nestorians and did not understand Persian.¹⁹

In challenge with McDowall let us consider that the Kurds of 18th century, and then, are the same of today's Kurds and discuss their presence in Kerkuk region.

Despite the fact that he considered Turkmen the majority in the towns of Kerkuk region, in 1787 Howel named Kerkuk the capital of so-called the Turkish Kurdistan. However, he met no Kurds and presented no evidence of any Kurdish dwellings in the region. His Kurds were synonym of the Yazidies of today. He did not comment on their language. Throughout his travel in the region he did present any information about the presence of the Kurds.²⁸

"The people called Curds, are supposed to be descendants from the ancient Parthians, and offer adoration to Sheitan, or Satan; whom, considering as the author of all evil, they worship to prevent his causing mischief to them, or to their cattle. A few of them join the Turks in occupying the towns; but the greater number prefer a wandering, pastoral life, like the Arabs, whom they likewise resemble in their disposition to rapine and violence"

Jackson in 1799 passed through all the cities on the High Way without mentioning any Kurdish dwellings in Kerkuk region, nevertheless, he considers Altun Kopru as the capital of Turkish Kurdistan:²¹

"This town is at present the capital of Turkish CURDISTAN, and a Bashaw resides in it"

The question which arises is: were Howel and Jackson aware of the Bitlisi's and Celebi's Kurdistan?

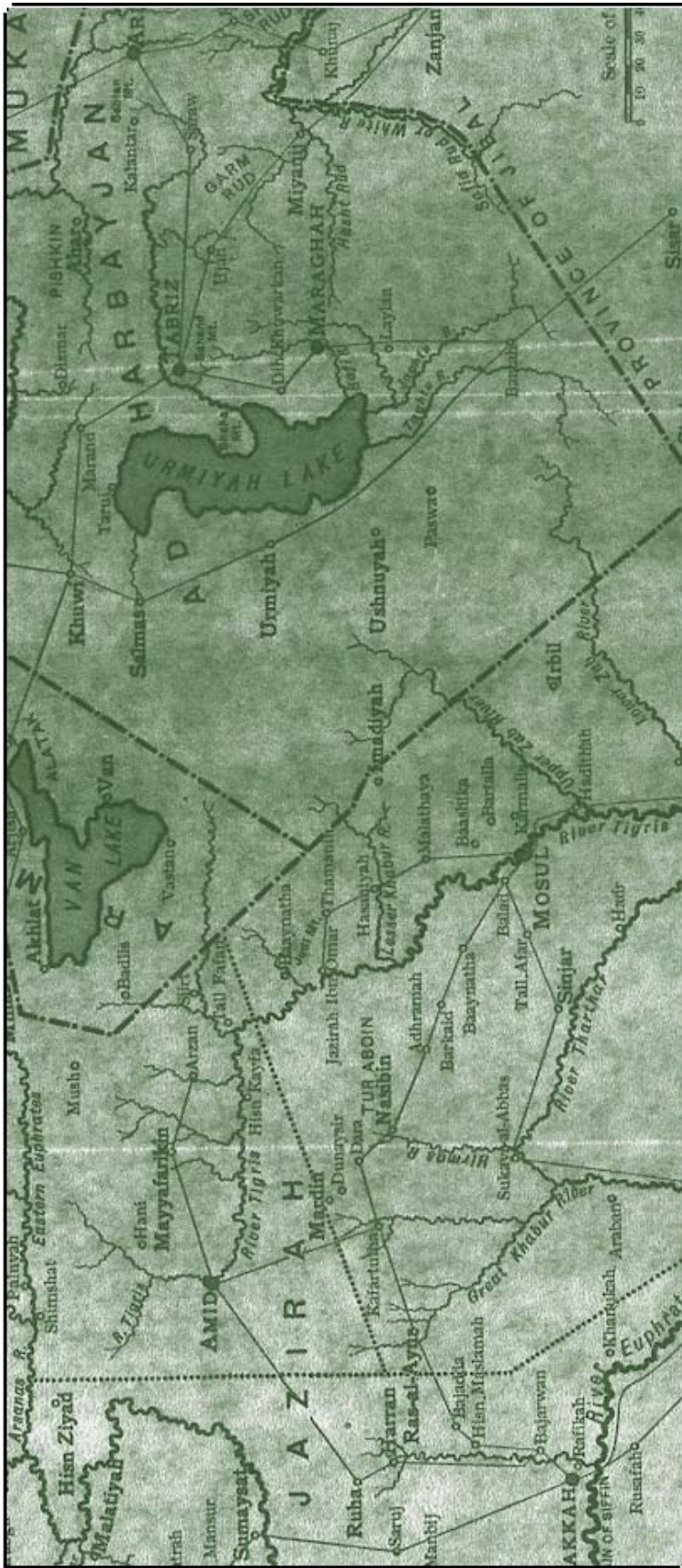
In fact, Marr and O'balance, both present a clue to the subject of this chapter; they both date back the arrival of the Kurds into the Iraq to the latter centuries.

*Marr:*¹⁰

"In recent history, Kurds have been migrating from the mountains into foothills and plains, many settling in and around Mosul in the north and in the cities and towns along the Diyalah River in the south, but most Kurds still live along the lower mountain slopes where they practice agriculture and raise livestock"

*O'balance:*¹²⁷

"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"



Map 3. Provinces of the North - West frontier, with Jazirah and Adharbayjan. From Le Strange, "The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate"

Rich in 1820 clearly portrayed the Kurdish region in Kerkuk province of 1976. He described only Chamchamal at the Fareast and Shuwan at the east north of Kerkuk as inhabited by the Kurds, but he excluded both regions from what was called Kurdistan.^{47, 48} He considered the natives of Kerkuk not Kurdish: He said:¹²⁸

"Kerkuk is the mart to which all the production of Suleymaniyya are carried, not by the Kurds them self's, by the natives of Kerkuk, who come here for the purpose, and make advances of money to the cultivators for their rice, honey, & c"

The narratives of consecutive travelers in the 19th century explained clearly the displacement of Kurdish boundaries towards the west into the Turkmen regions towards the end of the same century. Abu Ṭalib Khan in 1810, Buckingham in 1816, Ker Porter in 1817 and Rich in 1820 passed through the High Way in Kerkuk province safely and without meeting any Kurdish elements or confronting robbers. After a decade the travelers started speak of the scattered Kurdish robbers on the High Way which the Kurds used to start move to the west.

While at the time of Rich in 1820 Kifri was about 27 km away from Kurdish boundaries, Mignan in 1930s displaced the boundary to the neighborhood of Kifri.²⁶

"The Koords are not very particular in regard to the limits of their boundary lines; but the neighborhood of Kifri, to which town we were proceeding, is considered by them as the south-eastern frontier of their country. It is situated upon a branch of the Odorneh, and is about fifty miles to the southward of the encampment of Ibrahim Kanchee. Our march was very wearisome, for the plain we had traversed was covered with young locusts, which gave ourselves and our cattle the greatest annoyance".

Fraser in 1834 showed that even the road between Kifri and Kara Tepe became unsafe. He said when he was in Kifri:¹²⁹

"It was, in truth, a rather awkward stage; for lying just upon the border between Koord and Arab, the road was liable to pillage from both parties, while to detect the culprits might be very difficult; and I half expected a rencontre with our old friends" "We escaped clear, however, as on many occasions, and reached Karateppéh, a small and squalid village after a march of twenty miles"

Geary's report in 1878 declared that even the way from Tuz Khurmatu until beyond Tawuk region was invested by the Kurdish robbers.^{130 - 133}

"At the small twon of the Kuffree, which is about a hundred and twenty miles north-east of Baghdad, one is out of the country of Arabs, and enters that of the Kurds, the post route being now far from the Tigris, and skirting the Kurdish hills. The change is not at all for better. There is a truculence about the Kurd, both in appearance and character, which makes one regret the Arab, who is generally open to reason, and will not kill without cause. Mere robbery is a trifle in these parts, and no sensible person disturbs himself much about it. But it is different when robbery is prefaced by murder"

"I could not go back either. The road to Thawook was not safe; a number of the Kurds had been seen on the look out for travelers or caravans"

"The object of the Mudir's journey I was given to understand was to concert with the governor of Thawook measures for the dispersion of the Kurdish marauders, who were keeping the country in hot water"

"The Kurds are troublesome to the north of Kerkook as they were to the south of it"

This constant immigration of the Kurds into Kerkuk region was also clarified by the commission of the League of Nations and McDowall:^{134, 135}

"Along the high-road which crosses the fertile plains we meet with a medley of populations. Races make their appearance, coalesce, are subjected to conditions of symbiosis and change their manner of life. The Kurd has been coming down from the mountains, especially since he has given increased attention to agriculture, and his tribal organisation is already weakened by this change in his mode of life. In the plain, when he mixes with other populations, when he is no longer so isolated and sheltered as in his solitary mountain valleys and basins, and when he comes more

under the influence of the central administration which tends to break down his tribal system, the Kurd becomes a peasant; then, if the chief's family dies out or loses its influence, the process of disintegration is complete. In spite of this, the Kurd - as we have already stated - still constitutes the strongest racial element in the country. He is taking possession of the arable land and is "Kurdizing" certain towns"

"The towns and villages along the High Way running from Mosul to Baghdad were mainly Turkish speaking, being Turkmen", "But, as the commission noted, the Kurd 'is taking possession of the arable and in "Kurdizing" certain towns' specially the Turkmen's ones of the High Way"

The reports of Keppel¹³⁶⁻¹⁴⁰ support Marr¹⁰ and give a clear idea about the beginning of Kurdish movement into Diyala province after the first half of the 19th century which were previously all void of the Kurdish inhabitants. Baquba, Khanaqin, Kizil Rubat, Sharaban, which are now largely Kurdified.

"From the ferry we rode about 2 miles along the banks of the river, arrived at Bacoubah, our second day's march. This appears to have been a very considerable place, but has been laid almost entirely in ruins by the army of Coords, under the command of Mohammad Ali Meerze".

"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." "This town was, not many months back, one of the most populous and thriving in the pashalick of Baghdad, now the whole population consisted of about 3 families"

"Our tents were pitched to the north of the town. Kizil Rubaut, in common with its neighbors from the vindictive spirits of its Coordish enemies"

"In an hour and a half we found ourselves at Baradan, which, in common with other villages, has suffered from the inroads of the Coordish army"

"Khanaki, which is of reputed antiquity, defines the frontier of the Pashalick of Bagdad, and has met with a fate natural to its unfortunate position between two rival powers. About two years ago, it was taken by Mohummud "Ali Meerza, and must at that time have had its share of the calamities of war"

MAPS:

1. Map 1. Sketch of the travel route of Claudius James Rich at 1820
2. Map 2. the western boundaries of Kurdistan (red line) which was given by Rich. A section of the Map of C. J. Edmonds entitled "Parts of the Liwas Kerkuk and Sulaymani" from the "Kurds, Turks and Arabs"
3. Provinces of the North-West frontier, with Jazirah and Adharbayjan. From Le Strange, "The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate", Cambridge University Press 1930, P. 86

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