



## Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation

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### Report

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Subject: **Western intellectuals fall collectively into error**

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It became a habit of Western intellectuals, writers and journalists towards the end of the Ottoman Empire and after World War I, to exaggerate the Kurdish case to promote the benefit-dependent policy of their countries. This made almost all sections of the Western community to develop an inflated imagination and an overstated compassion regarding the Kurds.

The return of Mustafa Barazani to Iraq from his exile in the Soviet Union after the 14<sup>th</sup> July 1958 revolution (which overthrew the monarchy put in place by Great Britain after World War I) was the beginning of a new ambitious Kurdish nationalist movement which aimed at the creation of a separate Kurdish state in the north of Iraq, thereby marginalizing the Turkmen inhabitants of this region by pretending that Mosul, Erbil and even Kirkuk were Kurdish cities.

This hegemonic claim of Barazani was rejected by the new Iraqi government (and of course by all the Turkmen) and Barazani fled to the mountains of northern Iraq to start a new rebellion against the central government in Baghdad and a civil war in the north of Iraq. This rebellion, because it was against the new republic of Iraq immediately gained the sympathy of Western policy makers and Western media.

Kurdish writers and politicians took advantage of this Western sympathy with their rebellion against the Iraqi regime to promote their propaganda and introduce a large number of false information about their suffering, rights and violation of their human rights to the Western opinion. (1)

An immediate consequence of such unjust claims and propaganda was the inclusion of large cities which contain only small pockets of Kurds, i.e. Kerkuk and Erbil, inside the expanded imaginary Kurdistan boundaries.

Today, unfortunately for the peaceful and unarmed Turkmen of Iraq, Kurds are in control of practically all the north of Iraq with the complicity and help of the Anglo-American occupation forces, accomplishing their old and unlimited appetite to usurp Turkmen's rights, lands and properties.

Today, well known journalists writing in important American newspapers, such as W. Safire, (2) Paul McEnroe, (3) T. Neilan, (4) Luke Harding (5) and Maggy Zanger (6)

harbour an exaggerated and unhealthy sympathy for the Kurds and continue to repeat what the Kurds tell them without investigation, describing Kerkuk as a “historical and predominantly Kurdish city” or “the heart of Kurdish nationalism”.

For the same reasons, some scholars commit even more serious mistakes: C.A. O’Leary was not satisfied by making Kerkuk a “historically Kurdish city”, but she also described northern Iraq as “predominantly Kurdish”, such assertions cannot be found in any reliable source. (7, 8)

As an example, we present what Professor Leezenberg has written in his article entitled: “The Shabak and the Kakais: Dynamics of Ethnicity in Iraqi Kurdistan” and leave it to you to judge and determine to which extent Western opinion was biased towards the Kurds or was misled by them and which type of mistakes have been made. (9)

Professor Leezenberg states:

“The Iraqi government and the Kurdish nationalists were not the only ones who attempted to co-opt the Kakais, however. In the **1970s**, Turkmen nationalists wanted to present them as a Turkmen subgroup: thus, the Kakai poet Hijri Dede, who had written works in Persian, Kurdish and Gorani (but not in Turkish) was made a member of the Turkmen Writers’ Union in Baghdad. Hijri’s offspring, who were stated to have become *jash* (“donkey foal”, i.e. government agents) in the 1980s.”

The above statement is completely false, for the following reasons:

Hijri Dede wrote mainly in Turkmen and has only written a few poems in Kurdish (10), moreover, Hijri Dede **died** on 11.12. **1952**.

## **OPEN LETTER TO WESTERN ACADEMICS, WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS**

As prominent academics, writers and journalists in the West, your writings are read by millions and will be kept in the libraries for hundreds of years as reliable references. You are lecturing or talking in important conferences everywhere in the world and many times for the sake of the Kurdish people who distribute your publications widely in the Western community and launch them on many websites on the internet.

We are asking you to:

- Evaluate your knowledge carefully about the north of Iraq and please be particularly careful of what you hear from the Kurds.
- Make the Turkmen community’s plight and long suffering in Iraq one of your research cases.

It is a fact that neither the Turkmen nor the Arabs of Iraq can reach your numerous publications which are all in favour of the Kurds and often biased to their cause because of their 45-year long propaganda. Even if they could reach your numerous publications, the Turkmen and Arabs of Iraq are not in position to correct or criticize most of them.

Economical and cultural suppression of the Turkmen of Iraq for several decades have destroyed almost all the centres of powers in their community, particularly the cultural and organizational abilities. Consignment of a sum from the oil revenues for the Kurds since 1991 (after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War) on one hand and deprivation of the Turkmen on the other hand was another blow to the already weakened political integration. Furthermore, it is important to note that the Turkmen did not receive any kind of support during this long period, not even from Turkey.

Reports and articles about the Turkmen of Iraq and Kerkuk, which were written depending on reliable references, are attached. Two important articles, written in Arabic, entitled: “*When was Kerkuk your Jerusalem? Our teaching books are the reason for our poor knowledge of the Iraqi History*” and “*The terms Kurds and Kurdistan*” which include very important reliable facts about the Kurds in northern Iraq are also attached.

Reports:

SOITM 1 <<http://members.lycos.nl/kirkukjournal/1%20SOITM%20Report1.pdf>>

SOITM 2 <<http://members.lycos.nl/kirkukjournal/1%20SOITM%20Report2.pdf>>

Articles:

*The Ethnic Reality of the Kirkuk Area*

<[http://members.lycos.nl/kirkukjournal/Ethnic\\_Reality\\_%20Kirkuk.pdf](http://members.lycos.nl/kirkukjournal/Ethnic_Reality_%20Kirkuk.pdf)>

*Kerkuk City* <<http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/>>

*Kerkuk is not Kurdish City* <<http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/ed6.html>>

*Erbil City* <[http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/erbil\\_city.html](http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/erbil_city.html)>

*When was Kerkuk your Jerusalem? Our teaching books are the reason for our poor knowledge of the Iraqi History* <<http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/ed7.html>>

*The term: Kurd and Kurdistan* <[http://www.turkmen.nl/1\\_journal5/3.html](http://www.turkmen.nl/1_journal5/3.html)>

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**Engineer Salman MOFAK**

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**Merry FITZGERALD**

Human Rights Activist  
Committee for the Defence of the  
Iraqi Turkmen Rights, Belgium.

**Engineer Orhan KETENE**

Iraqi Turkmen Front U.S. Representative  
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**References:**

(1) Nouri Talabani, an immigrant Kurd to England who is a Professor of Law, in his book entitled “Iraq’s Policy of Ethnic Cleansing: Onslaught to change national/demographic characteristics of the Kirkuk Region”, which is translated into many language and massively distributed in Europe, has presented a large number of false information, particularly about the population characteristics of Cities in the northern Iraq. Unfortunately his book had been prefaced by Lord Eric Avebury.  
<<http://members.lycos.nl/Kirkukcity/Talabani.pdf>>

(2) William Safire, “Follow the money”, Op-Ed Columnist, New York Times  
Monday, April 21, 2003 Posted: 6:21 AM EDT (1021 GMT).

“Money recaptured from the Thief of Baghdad should be used to build new villages for those Arabs he transferred north in his campaign to ethnically cleanse Kirkuk of troublesome Kurds. That would allow a peaceful return of Kurds to their ancestral homes without displacing Arab or Turkmen families.”

<<http://www.cnn.com/2003/US/04/21/nyt.safire>>

(3) Paul McEnroe, Star Tribune, "Kurds celebrate as Saddam's threat seems to diminish" Published April 10, 2003.

"They were headed toward the front lines near Iraqi-held Kirkuk, the oil-rich city that used to be populated mostly by Kurds and that is widely known as the Jerusalem of Kurdistan."

<<http://www.startribune.com/stories/303/3815811.html>>

(4) T. Neilan, "Car Bomb Explodes in Kirkuk, With Up to 12 Reported Dead", New York Times, thu Nov 20, 2:34 PM ET.

"Kirkuk is geographically in the Kurdish area of northern Iraq, but it is a multinational city with a population of Turkmen, Arabs and Assyrians, Mr. Sabir said."

<[http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/nyt/20031120/ts\\_nyt/carbombexplodesinkirkukwithupto12reporteddead](http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/nyt/20031120/ts_nyt/carbombexplodesinkirkukwithupto12reporteddead)>

(5) Luke Harding, "Kurdish fighters take Kirkuk", The Guardian, Friday April 11, 2003.

"With no US troops to be seen, it was easy to be confused. Earlier, the Americans had given stern warnings to the Kurds that they should not try and seize Kirkuk, or any of the other strategic oil cities in northern Iraq. Kirkuk, although pre-dominantly a Kurdish city, has a large Turkish-speaking minority, and any Kurdish move on it would provoke a wrathful response from Turkey."

<[http://www.guardian.co.uk/The\\_Kurds/Story/0,2763,934373,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/The_Kurds/Story/0,2763,934373,00.html)>

(6) Maggy Zanger, "Refugees in Their Own Country"

"Kirkuk has been a majority-Kurdish city for hundreds of years. It lies along an important trade and administrative route linking what is now central Iraq with Turkey, Syria and Iran. Commerce and governance brought Arabs and Turks to the area, but even the Ba'th admitted in 1989 that their Arabization efforts to date "did not raise the percentage [of Arabs and Turkomans in Kirkuk] to 60 percent."

<<http://home.cogeco.ca/~kurdistanobserver/18-3-02-refugees-in-their-own-country.html>>

(7) Carole A. O'Leary, "Post Saddam Iraq", Washington Times, 26 September 2002.

Turkey appears to have positioned itself to intervene militarily in the event of a regime change in Iraq. Turkish tanks are positioned in areas well inside the Kurdish safe haven. In the Barwari area, the Turkish flag's crescent and star are carved into the mountainside below, where Turkish tanks are stationed. Turkey's defense minister, Sabahattin Cakmakoglu, recently declared that "Turkey considers northern Iraq to be under its direct care" and would not tolerate the region "being subjugated to the interests of others" — the "others" being, of course, Iraqi Kurds who represent the majority community in Iraqi Kurdistan (northern Iraq) and the second largest ethnic group in Iraq. Whether the historically Kurdish city of Kirkuk is incorporated into a permanent Kurdistan regional governorate in a future Iraq and whether a separate federal region for the Turkoman is to be established are decisions best left to the Iraqi people.

<<http://www.krg.org/docs/articles/oleary-washingtonTimes-sep-2002.asp>>

(8) Carole A. O'Leary, History News Network, "Post-Saddam Iraq" .

The area of northern Iraq where Kurds predominate is a region of about 83,000 square kilometres. This is roughly the same size as Austria. Smaller ethno-linguistic communities of Assyrian - Chaldeans, Turkomans, Arabs, and Armenians are also found in Iraqi Kurdistan. In Iraq there are approximately 3.7 million Kurds in the predominantly Kurdish northern safe haven area, and between 1 and 2 million in the

rest of Iraq, particularly Baghdad, Mosul and that part of Iraqi Kurdistan still under the control of the Baghdad regime  
<<http://hnn.us/articles/1172.html>>

(9) Michiel Leezenberg "The Shabak and the Kakais:  
Dynamics of Ethnicity in Iraqi Kurdistan"  
<<http://kurdweb.humanrights.de/kval/english/articles/articles-007.html>>

(10) Dede Hijri, The Turkmen Literature, Kerkuk City Website,  
<[http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/B\\_sair2.html](http://members.lycos.nl/Kerkuk/B_sair2.html)>