

Ethnic Allocation of Kerkuk Population at the time of Sulayman the Magnificent

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The vast oil deposit under the ground of Mosul province of Ottomans was the main reason, which made the British government fight for the region during the World War I. Before this war, Kerkuk was mentioned only in the books of travellers and in the population registers of the Ottomans Empire.

Since 1918, the western powers started to pay significant attention to the Middle East region after the discovery of the huge oil deposits. In addition to objective publications, most of the writers, particularly, those who were officials and high-ranking soldiers in the British mandate, biased to support the longstanding policy of their governments.

The Ottomans correspondences and dossiers, which were written in peace periods, can be considered from the most reliable sources to study the demography of the north of Iraq. The estimations had been done depending on age groups and the religion of the peoples and not the ethnicity. This may be due to the different situation of different religious communities in recruiting to the military service and collecting taxes.

Important reliable statistics can be found in the Ottoman's dossiers on the Kerkuk region. The highest administrative officials made these Statistics after investigation in the regions.

Information about the religion and administration of Kerkuk region can be found in the Ottomans registers number 111 and 285, which are found in the General Directorate of the Turkish Republic Achieves and in the Directorate of the Ottomans achieves.

The register number 111 constitutes 83 pages and dates back to 1540, the period of Suleiman the magnificent. It includes the reviewed statistics on the districts Daquq, Kerkuk and Nilqaz. In the correspondence, which was sent to the Shahrazor Governor and the Judge of Kerkuk, it is mentioned that Kerkuk is included in the Province of Shahrazor. To avoid confusion with Zur province, the frontiers of the latter province were Musul at the east, Diyarbakr at north, Aleppo at west and Syria at south. In 1870s, both Erbil and Kerkuk regions were detached from Shahrazor province, this name was used only for Sulaymaniyya region. In 1902, Kerkuk sub-districts were Malha, Tuz Khurmatu, Altun Kopru, Keel and Shuwan. The central district had 133 village and the other districts had 348.

The register includes the name of the inhabitants of central Kerkuk district and it's villages. The ethnic nature of region can be estimated by the analyses of the inhabitant's names Depending on onomastics, toponymy and anthroponomy.

The names which are used by all the Muslim communities, such as Muhammad, Ali, Ahmed, Hassan, Hussein ... etc, are put out of the calculations. The names, which were used by the particular communities, are listed. Aydin, Bayram, Budak, Tankri and Werdi are Turkish names, while the names Shirzad, Dara, Jamshid and Qubad are used by the Persians. Tufayl, Basim and Sufyan are almost purely Arab names. The ethnic names were also used following or preceding the names. For example, Khafi Arab, Zayn al-Ddin Arab, Khibyar Bahlul al-Kurd, Jamshid al-Kurd, Darwish al-Kurd ... etc. The Turkish names on this style had never been found. This may be due to that the Turkish inhabitants were dominating the region.

The register includes the name of adult inhabitants. There is 7320 inhabitants name in 1500 forms. The number of Muslims are 6990, 180 Christians and 150 Jewish. The Turkish names

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Aslan, Hurmuz, Tankeri, Wermish and Oruch are found to be Christian's. Noting worth that 350 Christians families inhabited Kerkuk before the First World War. Their mother language was Turkmen written in Syrics letters.

The Turkish names are found in the following forms and numbers:

Name	No.	Name	No.	The bellow names are mentioned just on one occasion	
Bayram	65	Budak	52	Jim Quli	Dede Quli
Murat	51	Bir Quli	48	Haydar Quli	Qara Bir Quli
Allawerdi	47	Khan Quli	48	Murad Quli	Nazar Quli
Qara	41	Oruch	34	Zannun Quli	Allah Wermish
Imam Quli	136	Shah Quli	134	Hak Werdi	Bayram Geldi
Allah Quli	75	Hussein Quli	114	Khan Geldi	Bir Geldi
Ali Quli	42	Sultan Quli	24	Abbas Quli	Aldi Quli
Yar Quli	24	Yol Quli	24	Aydin Quli	Didar Quli
Jan Quli	22	Sayyid Quli	21	Khalil Quli	Hayat Quli
Tankiri Quli	20	Uways Quli	18	Khidir Quli	Qoja Quli
Khuda Quli	16	Bayram Quli	15	Ibrahim Quli	Isa Quli
Ahmad Quli	13	Baba Quli	10	Inayat Quli	Qara Imam Quli
Gayp Quli	10	Amir Quli	10	Mahmut Quli	Mirza Quli
Shah Werdi	125	Khada Werdi	27	Odunchu Shah Quli	Guwandik
Takri Wermish	25	Allah Weren	13	Riza Quli	Sada Quli
Takri Weren	10	Dawlat Geldi	9	Maydan Quli	Ziya Quli
Qadir Quli	8	Mohammed Quli	8	Khalik Weren	Tankiri
Khalik Werdi	8	Mahdi Quli	6	Werdi	Dush Geldi
Mir Quli	5	Dawud Quli	5	Khosh Geldi	
Hassan Quli	5	Imam Werdi	4		
Jan Geldi	4	Darwish Quli	3		
Haji Quli	3	Bir Werdi	3		
Khaber Geldi	3	Yar Geldi	3		

The Turkmen Shiite names are dominating the inhabitants.¹ Two groups of names are found to be 1217. The first groups, which are mainly used by the Baktashis and Kizilbash Turkmen, are: Shah Quli, Hassan Quli, Shah Ali and Hayder Quli. The second groups, which are used in Kazakhstan and Kirgizstan, are ended by Werdi and Geldi.²

The names of tribes and families and the names of their men in Kerkuk region were also mentioned in the register 111.

Lik tribe: Allah Werdi, Shah Werdi, Qaytmaz, Qara, Imam Quli, Donmez, Kuceri, Satilmish, Ojak, Karaca etc.

Solduz tribe: from the Ilhanids people. Dush Geldi, Sevindik, Bayram, Tankri, Wermish, Turmish etc.

Doger tribe: related to the Buzak family of Oguz. Its extension is found in Anatolia.

Bayat Karaca Tribe: also related to Buzak.

Kilwan Tribe: Ugurlu, Oruch, Bayindir, It is expected that this tribe entered Iraq from Kilwan in Azerbaijan.

Zangana Tribe: It is possible that this tribe entered Iraq from Zangana region in Azerbaijan. They divided in to 3 groups. Kalandar Bey, Katkhida wilid Zuhrah and Ali wilid Devletyar. From the names of the people of this tribe; Isilmaz, Kaytamaz, Tankiri, Wermish, Ugur, Satilmish and Kilic. This tribe is now completely Kurdified.

Nilgaz Tribe: a branch of the seven tribes of the main Turkish clan Kimik, who inhabited the High Artish region in Middle Asia in the tenth century. It can also be learned from the register that this tribe moved to the area around 1540. The villages, which were inhabited by this tribe, are mentioned in the register, too: Agjalar, Jujurdi Buzuk, Susli, Gok Tepe, Jujurdi Kucuk, Tulkadan, Babak, Kulluja, Kazan Otagi, Kurt Daligi, Klibash, Kalander, Suritash, Kechine and Kapcikay,

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The villages of Daquq district were Matik, Batmanli, Ikiz Tepe, Kush Tan, Shih Kindi, Lasun, Ali Saray, Tuz Khurmatu and Chobkan. From the villages of central district Kerkuk were Cerbeklu, Marga, Beshir, Yengice, Khurmatu Tezik, Tisin, Bulawa, Tercil, Karalir, Laylan, Debli, Yarimca, Kokdan, Telkeshkan, Kara Hasan Yaylagi, Kushcu and Ali Karaca.

The following are the name of plains and pastures in the region: Kizilca Kislak, Ulu Kishlak, Toprak, Cubuklu, Kizil Dere, Kucuk Cinar, Kara Bulak, Tulk Harabasi, Bukut, Bugamsh, Ksuk Cinar, Gelin Agaci, Bayat Cami, Turkmen Bagi, Kara Incir, Deve Boynu, Narluca, Kush Dere, Yarimca, Tash, Bulak, Aga Bulak and Ikizce.³

We conclude that the number of inhabitants of the Kerkuk region in 1548 was 7320. The non-Muslims were 330; 150 Jewish and 180 Christians. The analysis of the names shows that the number of Turkmen was 6558; this makes 91.4% of total population. The number of the Persians and Arabs was 54 and 33 consecutively.

- This is translation of the article "Indisputable document: Population Registration of Kerkuk Governorate in 1548" by Dr. Mahir Nakip, published in Arabic in the Qardashliq Journal, version 28, 7th year, Published by Kerkuk Foundation, Istanbul 2005, p. 60.
- Reviewed for English language by M. Kelenchy

Notes by Translator

1. Domination of the Azeri names in Kerkuk region at that time supports the idea which claims that the large numbers of Turkmen soldiers of Shah Ismail entered into the north of Iraq after the decisive defeat of Shah Ismail in the battle of Chaldiran. (Matti Moosa, "Exreimst Shiites: The Gulat Sects", Syrancuse University Press, New York, 1988, P. 7, 8.)
The Battle of Chaldiran occurred on 23 August 1514 in the region of Tabriz and ended with a decisive victory for the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of Murat IV over the Safavids under the leadership of Shah Ismail.
The Iraqi Alawites (Shabaks) are now estimated to be about 400.000, while large numbers of Shiites of the Tuz Khurmatu regions were Alawites in the early 19th century when Claudia James Rich visited the region.
2. These names are unlikely to be Kurdish names, since the Kurds are not embraced Safawi doctrines and those who were recruited in Imsail Shah Army hated the Safawis. In his book "Travels to Tana and Persia" Josafa Barbaro and Ambrogio Contarini mention:
"All the Curds are Truer Mohammedans than the other inhabitants of Persia. Since the Persians have embraced the Saffavean doctrines, which the Curds would not be converted to it: and though they wear the red caftans, yet in their hearts they bear a deadly hatred to them". P. 157
3. The presence of Turkish names of towns, rivers and mountains at that time in Kerkuk region support the idea that the Turkmen presence in Kerkuk region dates back to the Seljuk's period after 1055. A large number of these Turkish names are still in use, which means that no other ethnic groups inhabited area for long period.

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