**CHY4U The Stateless Kurds – Notes**

**Source 1 – news article (current event)**

Kingsley, [Patrick](https://www.nytimes.com/by/patrick-kingsley) . “*Who Are the Kurds, and Why Is Turkey Attacking Them in Syria?”*

*New York Times*. Oct. 14, 2019 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/14/world/middleeast/the-kurds-facts-history.html>.

**Prompting Current Event**

* Turkish troops invaded northern Syria where most of Syria’s 5-10 million Kurds live

**Syrian Civil War**

* Back in 2011-12 protests began against Syria’s president Assad
	+ Military factions arose
	+ Kurds joined in through their YPP or People’s Protection Units
* The US joined an international group in 2014 and soon allied with effective Kurdish militias

**Kurdish Success Against ISIS Annoys Turkey**

* Kurdish militias were successful in winning a lot of territory from ISIS in northern Syria
	+ These lands border on Turkey which has been fighting what it labels as Kurdish terrorists for a very long time and fears a Kurdish state on its border
* The US was aligned with both Turkey and the Kurds at this point – a problem
	+ So the US tried to get the Kurds to separate themselves from the Turkish issue and got them to change their name in 2016 to Syrian Democratic Forces and to be less exclusively Kurdish and to withdraw from some positions right on the border with Turkey

**US Withdrawal**

* Oct. 6, 2019 Trump on phone call to Turkish leader Erdogan said he’d pull US troops out of northern border area
* Oct. 9 Turkish troops and some Syrian allies invaded
* Trump reacted by saying there would be economic sanctions on Turkey

**Results of the US Withdrawal**

* Turkey and its Syrian allies took 75 sq miles in a few days
* This could benefit ISIS since their ‘guards’ are gone and also the Syrian gov’t
* Assad’s main allies, Russia and Iran, will also benefit, esp as Russia seeks to become the main interlocuter between Turkey and Syria

**Source 2 – news article (current event and some historical background)**

BBC News, “Who are the Kurds?” BBC News Middle East. Oct 15, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29702440>

**Population Overview**

* 25-35 million people spread out over Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey and Armenia
* Mostly Sunni Muslims but not exclusively

**History of the Kurdish State**

* After WWI, the Treaty of Sevres (1920) made provisions for an independent Kurdish state but it did not come into being
	+ The creation of modern Turkey overrode it

**The Syrian Civil War**

* In the middle of 2013 ISIS started attacking Kurdish areas in northern Syria, lasting until middle of 2014
* Kurds responded with militias called the YPP (armed wing of the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party, YPD) – militias known as peshmerga
* In mid 2014 when ISIS put on a big attack the peshmerga got assistance from aerial strikes coordinated by a new international coalition including the US
* Turkish Kurds also went to assist
* Kurds emerged in control of Kobane by Jan. 2015
* By March 2019 the Kurds and allies had gained control of most of ISIS territory and proclaimed the end of the ISIS caliphate

**Oct. 2019**

* The US said it would leave the border area to create a ‘safe zone’ that was to be created by Turkey to resettle Syrian refugees and remove YPG soldiers

**Turkey and the Kurds – a History**

* Kurds comprise 15-20 % of Turkish population
* Long history of persecution, relocation, cultural restrictions since 1920s
* As a result, the PKK was formed in **1978** by **Abdullah Ocalan** to fight first for an independent state and then (1984) to fight against Turkey in an armed struggle
* 1990s the PKK moved its position from demanding independence to autonomy
* 2013 ceasefire between PKK and Turkey
* Fighting started back up in July 2015 after a border incident involving ISIS (in southeast Turkey)

**Turkey in Syrian Civil War**

* Involvement since Aug. 2016 when it sent troops to fight against ISIS
	+ Specific intent to capture territory so that Kurds could not create a contiguous collection of land under their control

**Kurds in Syria**

* 7-10 % of Syria’s population
* Mostly in Damascus, Aleppo, Kobane, Afrin and Qamishli (pre-war)
* Has not been an easy ride: denial of citizenship, relocation, Arabization

**Syrian Civil War**

* As civil war went on, Kurdish forces stepped in and in Jan. 2014 declared autonomous administrations in Afrin, Kobane and Jazira (done by PYD – Democratic Union Party)
	+ Expanded in March 2016 to include other non-Kurdish areas as a “federal system” [Rojava] but this was rejected by the US, Turkey, Syria and the Syrian opposition
		- Not a direct request for independence but definite increase in control and guarantee of rights

**Kurds in Iraq**

* 15-20% of Iraq’s population
* KDP (Kurdish Democratic Party) formed in 1946 by Mustafa Barzani to push for autonomy
* 1961 KDP began an armed struggle
* 1970s Iraqi gov’t resettled Arabs in Kirkuk (an oil city) and forced resettlement of Kurds
* 1980s Iran Iraq War – Kurds sided with Iran
* 1988 Saddam Hussein got back at Kurds with chemical weapons at Halabja
* 1991 – at end of first Gulf War with Iraq’s defeat, Kurds staged an uprising led by Massoud Barzani of KDP and Jalal Talabani of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)
* The US cooperated by enforcing a no-fly zone so self-rule for a few years began with PUK and KDP cooperation
* But 1994-1998 PUK and KDP fought for four years
* 2003 after 2nd Gulf War’s defeat of Saddam Hussein, the parties once again cooperated to govern the Kurdistan Regional Government with Barzani as its president and Talabani as Iraq’s head of state (confirmed but role is largely ceremonial)
* Sept. 2017 the region held an independence vote that the central gov’t claimed was illegal
	+ 3.3 million people voted and 90% of them voted for independence
	+ But Iraqi president nullified it
	+ This was followed by an Iraqi troop invasion of the area and Kirkuk

**Source 3 – news article (current event)**

# Taddonio, Patrice. “Flashback: How US-Backed Kurds Defeated ISIS in Kobani, Syria.” PBS Frontline. Oct. 9, 2019. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/flashback-how-us-backed-kurds-defeated-isis-in-kobani-syria/>

**Looking Back at Kobani in Light of Oct. 2019 US Withdrawal**

* From 2016 Frontline film on US-Turkey-Kurds interrelations, *Confronting ISIS*
	+ 2014 when ISIS was strengthening in Kobani, Turkey would not let potential help use the US airbase there, Incirlik
	+ PS quotes (will need later):’ “Turkey perceived [a] greater threat from the Kurdish groups that were defending Kobani [than from ISIS].  And because of that, they wanted the Kurdish insurgency in northern Syria to be extinguished via ISIS,” Turkish foreign policy expert Ahmet Kasim Jan told FRONTLINE’s Martin Smith.’
	+ ‘“It’s difficult for us to understand why, you know, our ally, United States, a NATO ally with which we have a model partnership, will support an organization that directly or indirectly attacks Turkey, targets Turkish security forces, you know, inside Turkey,” Ibrahim Kalin, senior adviser to Erdogan, told Smith.’
	+ When it seemed ISIS might win, Obama allowed an airdrop of arms, ammunition and medical supplies for the Kurds in Kobani
	+ Of course Turkey was upset but the move helped start the elimination of ISIS in the region

**Source 4 (current event)**

“The Kurds are Creating a State of Their Own in Northern Syria.” *The Economist.* May 23, 2019. <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2019/05/23/the-kurds-are-creating-a-state-of-their-own-in-northern-syria>

Look it up on Economist account

Source 5 – news article (current event)

<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/09/768490136/turkish-forces-launch-military-operation-against-kurds-at-syrian-border>

includes a tweet from Erdogan about the incursion into Kobani (potential primary source – save for later)

**Source 6a – reference article – (historical background)**

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. “*Kurds”*. Encyclopaedia Britannica. Dec. 17, 2019.<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kurd>.

**Kurdish Nationalism – Origins**

* First arose in 1897 through a Kurdish newspaper, then a revival of it in Istanbul and then Cairo. (not much info beyond this – find more)

**Source 6 – reference article – (historical background)**

Kutschera, Chris. "Kurds." In *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by Philip Mattar, 1344-1346. Vol. 2. New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3424601603/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=49672eb1.

**Long Ago History**

* Debated origins – Mesopotamia and/or Tauros Mountains
* 1840s – Ottoman Kurdistan was independent, led by Amir Bedir Khan

**Culture**

* Their own language, Kurdi or Kurdish, with 3 main dialects related to 3 main regions
* Also written in scripts relevant to each region
* Mostly Sunni Muslims with strong tradition of Sufism
* Mostly peaceful coexistence with various neighbours but some conflicts (e.g., Kurds supported Ottoman genocide against Armenians)
* Historically nomadic herders but now many have moved to large cities

**Source 7 – reference article – (historical background)**

Kutschera, Chris. "Kurdish Autonomous Zone." In *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by Philip Mattar, 1339. Vol. 2. New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3424601599/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=079c8d3b.

**History of Autonomy**

* 1988 UN Security Council Resolution 688 called for an end to repression of Kurds in Iraq
* This led, after the first Gulf War in 1991, to President Bush’s declaration of the no-fly zone to protect Kurds in the region
* UN and Iraqi gov’t agreed and allowed Kurdish refugees to return
* In 2002 Iraqi forces left major cities including Erbil, leaving Kurds in control of 15, 400 sq miles of historic Kurdistan
* However, Barzani and Talabani and their factions couldn’t agree and the region was de facto separated: Irbil (DKP) and Sulaymaniyya (PUK)
* They eventually came to agreement and a federal parliament met
* UN’s Oil for Food Resolution was helpful to the regions

**Source 8 – reference article – (historical background)**

Kutschera, Chris. "Talabani, Jal al- [1934–]." In *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by Philip Mattar, 2151. Vol. 4. New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3424602625/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=87e69951.

**Jalal Talabani**

* He’s leftist, original Barzani was conservative
* Founded PUK (Kurdish Patriotic Union) in 1977
* Talabani was made a member of the Iraqi Governing Council in 2003 after the defeat of Saddam Hussein (confirms source 2)

**Source 9 – reference article – (historical background)**

Hassanpour, Amir. "Kurdish Revolts." In *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by Philip Mattar, 1339-1342. Vol. 2. New York, NY: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3424601600/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=fd332652.

**Long History of Revolts**

* But once autonomous regions of ‘Kurdistan’ became modernized some revolts took place under sheikhs or nationalist leaders
	+ e.g., 1879-80 vs. Ottomans and Iran led by Sheikh Ubaydallah but he was a feudal elite
* as the states that succeeded Ottoman Empire in containing parts of Kurdistan came to have modern instruments of statehood such as bureaucracy and armies, Kurdish revolts began against them, especially a series of revolts in Iran and Turkey in the 1920s
* after WWII the society became less tribal and the fighting force came to be known as *peshmerga*, those who face death
* 1946 – Kurdish Republic was formed in nw Iran
* Barzanis’ revolts 1961-1975
	+ KDP vs. Iraq
* 1991 KDP and PUK vs. Iraq, safe haven area
* 1994 in Turkey PKK vs. Turkish gov’t
	+ Became more peaceful-oriented after 2002 (check this)

**Source 10 – reference article – (historical background)**

"Kurdish Conflicts." In *Gale Global Issues Online Collection*. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale, 2018. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CP3208520071/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=9e6208f6.

**Syria**

* 1979- Abdullah Ocalan transferred his movement to Syria and received Syrian gov’t support [look this up more]
* Therefore, many (up to 20%) PKK fighters in Turkey were actually Kurds from Syria [special note how this must have made Turkey feel towards Kurds and Syria]
* 1999 – Ocalan was captured and PKK sent out of Syria
* 2014 – Turks living along the Syrian border but in Turkey felt that the Turkish gov’t was not helping in the fight against ISIS – in Oct. protests began
* 2015 – Kurds liberated Kobani with US help

**Iraq**

* 1986-1989 Saddam Hussein vs. the Kurds
	+ Chemical weapon and mustard gas used on the village of Halabja
	+ 5000 dead
* In total 50 000 to 180 000 Kurds were dead and thousands more made into migrants
* Some limited self-gov’t after First Gulf War but then 2 Kurdish factions fought, only agreeing to work together in 2002
* 2005 Jalal Talabani was elected President of Iraq (a ceremonial job)
* 2014 Fouad Massoum became Kurdish president of Iraq
* By this time, ISIS was gaining territory in Syria and Iraq
* Sept. 2017 referendum: 90% wanted independence but Iraq said no and sent forces into Kirkuk resulting in a surge of 100 000 refugees
* No countries supported the referendum [their own self-interests override the Kurds’]

There is a section in this article that details the rise in tension along the Turkey-Syria border leading up to Kobani. Check it out if going to go deeper into that.

**Source 11 – reference article – (recent historical background on current event)**

"The merits of keeping Ocalan alive." *The Economist*, November 27, 1999, 54. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A57844027/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=58ad1560.

**Ocalan’s Death Sentence in Turkey**

* Nov 1999 Turkey’s court held up the verdict in appeal of Ocalan’s death sentence for treason
* Turkish PM Bulent Ecevit seems to be anti-death penalty – felt Turkey would have to yield to European Court of Human Rights if Ocalan’s lawyers appealed there

**EU as Goal**

* At this point Turkey was about to become a candidate for EU membership and EU countries were saying that Turkey should not use the death penalty – even US said it should improve its human rights situation
* The Turkish military also recognizes that Ocalan is far more dangerous as a dead martyr in converting Turks to the PKK’s cause and point of view

**Ocalan’s Conversion?**

* Ocalan himself has said that his revolution was a mistake and pushing for an end to restrictions on Kurdish culture is now his goal
* PKK fighters even turned themselves in to gov’t to show seriousness of Ocalan’s point

**Source 12 – reference article – (recent historical background on current event)**

Kutschera, Chris. "ABDULLAH OCALAN: THE END OF A MYTH." *The Middle East*, February 2000, 12. *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A59410577/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=d7b13cf3>.

**Cult Personality**

* Ocalan was known as a mythical figure and there was quite a huge amount of worship of him
* In truth he was a good guerilla leader who got some reduction of restrictions on Kurds in Turkey but he never got them a state

**Gave Up at Trial**

* He didn’t live up to the myth by standing up to Turkey
* His lawyers left him one by one, claiming that he wasn’t brave
* He was letting Turkey destroy the PKK by not resisting

**PKK’s Response**

* Perhaps surprisingly the party is following Ocalan’s orders to give up
* The author sees the roots of this seemingly odd reaction in what happened in Iran and Iraq earlier: hoped for agreements that would come in the future after giving up the fight – Barzani in Iran and Iraq
* Some Kurds might believe he is leading secret negotiations with Turkey?
* Some PKK Generals might want to rise up but they are afraid this is what Turkey wants: a final confrontation between them and the PKK

**Source 13 – reference article – (recent historical background on current event)**

"The war may be over; Turkey and the PKK." *The Economist*, March 30, 2013, 52(US). *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A323945657/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=305e3bc1.\

**Ocalan Still in Jail**

* Since 1999 he has lived on an island, alone

**Message of Ceasefire**

* His message to Kurds is that the war is over but it’s time for ideas – Turkey and Kurds should unite as Muslims
* A PKK leader in northern Iraq declared a ceasefire in reaction but later said they would be ready to but had not laid down their arms
* Now-Turkish PM Erdogan was pleased initially
* Reforms to constitution are sought to preserve Kurdish rights
* People feel that Erdogan brokered a deal with Ocalan (including support for him from a Kurdish party for the presidency – note: this is a more moderate Kurdish party, the HDP – Peoples’ Democratic Party) that got a good chunk of support (10%) later in 2015 election)
* Erdogan supported Iraqi Kurds who want lots of ‘stuff’ from Turkey
* Erdogan wants Istanbul to get 2020 Olympics so cities have to be safe from PKK ‘terrorism’

**Source 14 – reference article – (recent historical background on current event)**

"A dramatic change; Turkey's Kurdish rebels." *The Economist*, February 21, 2015, 60(US). *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A402233139/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=81c75009.

**2015 update on Ocalan**

* Still in jail
* Still leading PKK
* But PKK has said it wants a Swiss-style model for how Kurds can have some cultural control, no longer independence
* Ceasefire has lasted 2 years

**Influence of ISIS events**

* Now PKK has better relations with Iraqi Kurds who are now fighting ISIS
* Have been asked to help their fight and Iraqi Kurds are being welcomed into PKK’s fight in northern Syria [this is an interesting development in their unity problem]

**Source 15 – reference article – (current event)**

"Proud to be a Turk; Identity." *The Economist*, February 6, 2016, 11(US). *Gale In Context: Global Issues* (accessed February 16, 2020). <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A450846305/GIC?u=nort32991&sid=GIC&xid=0691263f>.

**Events in Syria Affecting Ceasefire with PKK (2016)**

* PKK’s Syrian branch has gotten stronger, worrying Erdogan and other Turks
* Syrian refugees came into Turkey in large numbers but aid did not flow to them very quickly, angering many Kurds
* Turkey worries that PKK is getting too much international support and thus legitimacy

**Ceasefire with PKK Over**

* Turkey bombed PKK targets in Iraq
* 600 people have died in Turkey in renewed violence between PKK supporters and gov’t troops
* The mood is more military now and less conciliatory, even amongst ordinary Turks who were willing to accept a new attitude toward Kurds

**Source 16 – specific article – (historical background)**

##### Laciner, Sedat and Ihsan Bal.The Ideological And Historical Roots Of Kurdist Movements In Turkey: Ethnicity Demography, Politics. *Turkish Weekly*. October 15, 2004. [https://web.archive.org/web/20071011225529/http://www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=15](https://web.archive.org/web/20071011225529/http%3A/www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=15)

I got to this source via a footnote on the Wikipedia article on Kurds. This is the way to use Wikipedia: don’t take notes on the article, notice the sources that are referred to in the article.

**Uprising vs. Ottomans in 1880**

##### ‘Bulloch and Harvey quote the relevant parts of Ubeydullah’s letter to the British consul at Bashkal [Van Province] as follows: PS Evidence“The Kurdish nation is a nation apart. Its religion is different from that of others, also its laws and custom. The chiefs of Kurdistan, whether they be Turkish or Persian subjects, and the people of Kurdistan, whether Muslim or Christian, are all united and agreed that things cannot proceed as they are with the two governments. It is imperative that the European governments should do something, once they understand the situation… We want to take matters into our own hands. We can no longer put up with the oppression.”’[[80]](https://web.archive.org/web/20071011225529/http%3A/www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=15#_edn80) [J. Bulloch and M. Harvey, No Friends but the Mountains: The Tragic History of the Kurds, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992)]

* British sent weapons in response
* They argue that Sultan Abdulhamid II successfully created a unification of Ottoman Muslims such that Kurds served during WW1.
* They therefore argue that the 1880 uprising wasn’t nationalistically Kurdish but more on the basis of a tribal/feudal leader seeking assistance against the imposition of Ottoman state taxes.
* They also argue that many Kurdish officials (tribal leaders) took on Ottoman gov’t positions at this time as the Ottoman Empire sought to reward them.

**Treaty of Sevres – primary source evidence**

##### ‘"If within one year from the coming into force of the present treaty the Kurdish people within the areas defined in Art. 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that the majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey . . . Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas. ... If and when such renunciation takes place, no objection will be raised by the Principal Allied Powers to the voluntary adhesion to such an independent Kurdish State of the Kurdish inhabiting that part of Kurdistan which hitherto been included in the Mosul Vilayet".’[[100]](https://web.archive.org/web/20071011225529/http%3A/www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=15#_edn100) [I. C. Vanly, The Kurds in Syria and Iraq', in Kreyenbrook and Sperl, The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview, (London: Routledge, 1992)]

* Prominent Kurdish leaders in almost-now Turkey were opposed to Sevres, considering it unnecessary foreign meddling in Muslim affairs
	+ After all, they had fought with the OE in the war, not against it

**1970s – formation of PKK**

* Socialism grew in Turkey from the 1950s on
* However, a split developed between Turkish socialism and Kurdish socialism in the 1970s
* PKK formed in 1974 and was more nationalistically focussed (which is why other socialists didn’t like it)
	+ They openly fought against the state in a guerilla war

Note on authors:

##### Sedat Laciner, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey. Ihsan Bal, Turkish national Police Academy, Ankara, Turkey.

 **Note on source:** take it with a grain of salt. I don’t know enough about internal Turkish affairs to say whether this source has an anti-Kurdish bias or not. It seems like it does in the sense that it rejects any legitimacy in the PKK’s demands. However, it does refer to other sources and these sources may be useful.

**Source 17 – specific source - book – (historical background)**

# Chatty, Dawn. *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Google Books.

# <https://books.google.ca/books?id=8OsgAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA231&lpg=PA231&dq=Kurds+fled+turkey+to+syria+in+1925&source=bl&ots=7tWQMS8h_V&sig=d78gym03yMZiF_CkfcI3KMX2PN0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=j2VcVNjNE8L2iQLk04CYAQ&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Kurds%20fled%20turkey%20to%20syria%20in%201925&f=false>

# Defining Kurdistan

# Author argues that boundaries only came to European interest in the late 19th century

# Europeans worried about what Russia would do started to chart boundaries, more precisely, count how many Muslims there were because Russians were only interested in Christians

# In 20th century, empires became countries and each wanted its own tidy borders

# With a tidy population (homogeneous)

# 1855 Revolt (page 243) (long term origins)

# Yezdan Sher rose against the Ottomans in present-day Iraq with the support of 100 000 men.

# Britain and France didn’t like this because they didn’t want to see this potentially independent territory come under Russian control

# In the Crimean War, Br and Fr had allied with the Ottoman Sher

# Empire against Russia

# Britain sent a mediator, Nimrud Rassam, who encouraged the Kurds to negotiate with the Ottomans over independence – Sher agreed, feeling he’d need the support of a European country anyhow if independence were to be achieved

# Sher went to negotiate in Constantinople and was promptly arrested and put in jail

# The revolt fell apart

# Abdul Hamid II and the Ottoman Response to Kurdish Revolts (page 245) (long term origins)

# The sultan allowed the growth of a small sector of Kurdish intellectual leadership through special schools for Kurds

# Or through military training as Kurds had been permitted entry into the Military Academies after 1870

# This enabled him to control Kurdish nationalism and limit it

# He was overthrown in 1908-9 Young Turk Revolt

# After Young Turk Revolt (pages 245-246)

# More growth of Kurdish nationalism

# Sheikh Abdul Qadir

# Kurdish journal (though printed in Turkish)

# Kurdish clubs

# The first Kurdish political organization (Kurdish Hope, est. 1910) with support of a Turkish parliamentarian

# Ottoman Asia (pages 247 – 248)

# Mountainous area with Armenians, Assyrians, Kurds, lots of Christians and nomads was hard for the OE to control

# Most Muslims there were Kurds

# Mostly tribal, which brought with it a certain negative attitude toward outside leadership

# They had been relatively used to doing their own thing as long as they didn’t attack Ottoman trade or villages / cities

# More OE control came after 1877-78 Russian-Ottoman War (under Abdul Hamid II)

# They (tribal Kurdish leaders) were coopted in the sense that their skills were transferred to benefit the OE

# Ie, creation of Hamidiyyah Cavalry in 1891

# Used against Armenians and even other Kurds

# But after the Young Turks, the CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) still didn’t control this area very effectively and a lot of tribal raiding went on

# In the decade before WWI, more OE control came through telegraphs, roads.

# Census information and conscription information was gathered

# After outbreak of WWI, troops sent elsewhere and tribal raiding continued

# There were Kurds in the OE army but mostly settled people and from cities more to the east

# WWI and Russian Interests (pages 250-251)

# Russians wanted to loosen OE control of the region but they didn’t want the Kurds to become independent (the same applied to Armenians)

# Where Russian troops swept into the Asian region in 1914, few Muslims were left afterward

# … (these pages are missing)

# End of WWI and Treaty of Sevres (pages 253-257) (long term origins)

# With the end of the Russian involvement due to the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, Britain stepped in to gain some control of former Russian territories in southern Iraq

# Negotiation for the Treaty of Sevres was affected by Br and Fr having differing positions on what to do with various territories – promises made on all sides and sometimes conflicting.

# Articles 62-64 of Part III of Section III dealt with Kurds

# Local autonomy first

# Then a mechanism to deal with an independent Kurdistan through overtures to be made to League of Nations (independent from Turkey – important note here)

# But language was “ambiguous” and states had competing interests

# Also because Mustafa Kemal in Turkey wasn’t interested in a Kurdish state

# Ataturk on the Treaty of Sevres and Lausanne (pages 257-258)

# Refused to sign the treaty (still a general at this time)

# Their priority was the creation of an independent Turkish state with the treaty as trying to minimize

# Britain and France separated after France agreed to support Kemal and his troops

# By 1923 the Turks agreed that Mosul could come under League of Nations via the Treaty of Lausanne and the modern states of Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran were created.

# Ataturk and the creation of modern Turkey (pages 259-260)

# He wanted to create a new Turkish identify as opposed to the old multiethnic Ottoman identity

# This required assimilation of minorities such as Kurds

# Some assented

# Many Kurds resented and resisted eventually leading to Kurdish nationalism

# Kurdish Nationalism (page 260, 263)

# Both Turkey and Britain wanted Mosul

# Britain even said the Kurds of Mosul could seek autonomy within Iraq (a newly British mandate)

# This would give Br access to oil in Mosul

# … source ends here

# Turkey fought into the 1930s to subjugate some Kurdish areas (Dersim) of the former OE through massacres, deportation, military control.

# Kurds in Syria (pages 267 -274, 277)

# Many Syrian Kurds live in the areas close to borders with Turkey and Iraq (the Jazirah). Also large populations in Damascus, Aleppo

# Many are descended from those who sought refuge from Turkey in the 1920s and 30s

# Many Kurds worked for Syrian independence

# The concern lies with 1% of the population who are recent arrivals through migration

# Oil discovered in some Kurdish regions in 1950s

# At same time, some became overly concerned about Kurds and discrimination began

# Also worsened during 1958-1961 period of the UAR when some didn’t believe in the loyalty of the Kurds to Nasser’s vision of a Syria-Egypt polity

# After the UAR broke up, Syria began to examine the composition of its population and found more Kurds than it thought

# In 1962 Kurds who could not prove they had been citizens in 1945 were dispossessed of their citizenship

# 120 000 became stateless (bidoon – an unofficial Kurdish term) even though many had been given citizenship by the French mandate

# Were called ajanib (non-citizen foreigners – no red identity card)

# No voting rights, couldn’t leave Syria (without papers – red identity card), education and health were up to their local leaders, some of whom gave these rights, others of whom did not

# Kurdish resistance to this was not unified and immediate

# Many Kurds associate themselves with the Syrian state, army, etc.

#  After Gulf War, Kurdish riots in Syria

# 277 Mostly about gaining civil rights in a formal way; not about Kurdish indepenendce

# A lot of focus on good education and right to learn the Kurdish language

**Source 18 – specific source - book – (historical background)**

# Natali, Denise. *The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey and Iran*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005. Google Books. March 24, 2020. <https://books.google.ca/books?id=G62NSVhprsQC&pg=PA1&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

# Chapter 2 Iraq’s Transition to a Colonial State

# P 27

# Br especially concerned about getting control over oil-rich region of Mosul in the new state in the 1920s

# Br officials offered incentives to Kurdish leaders and even said they’d recognize an independent Kurdistan

# Br also gave recognition to Kurds as an official minority

# P 28

# However, as the British continued to govern Iraq they treated Arabs better than Kurds. Their policy was to separate the various ethnic minorities.

# P 29

# The Br even bombed Kurdish villages

# They favoured the Kurdish rural tribal leaders over the urban, settled Kurds, even allowing them to have their own militias

# P 32

# This ended up hurting Kurdish nationalism in that the tribal leaders were favoured economically as well, such as in the price of tobacco: Kurdish region produced the vast majority of the tobacco in Iraq, resulting in some of the Kurdish landowners becoming very rich. They wanted to protect their interests so took little interest in Kurdish nationalism.

# P 33

# these tribal leaders also became tied to the crown, itself a new institution that needed propping up

# The gov’t kept the various Kurdish regions separate

# P 34

# also supported by the gov’t policy of emphasizing Kurdish dialects (regional) rather than a unified and standardized Kurdish that could be used as a unifying factor

# P 37

# the 1930 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty did not recognize any special Kurdish rights

# Thus Kurdish nationalism emerged in the 1930s

# P 46

# Later, as the Kurdish movement became more leftist it also became part of the larger anti-colonial movement, reinforcing loyalty to the Iraqi state rather than to any iteration of Kurdistan.

**Source 19 – specific source - article – (historical background and current events)**

# Ariav, Hagit. Council on Foreign Relations. The Time of the Kurds: A CFR InfoGuide Presentation. 2017. [https://www.cfr.org/interactives/time-kurds?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkumUvfTY5wIVEb7ACh3LAw-tEAAYASAAEgK7kvD\_BwE#!/time-kurds?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkumUvfTY5wIVEb7ACh3LAw-tEAAYASAAEgK7kvD\_BwE](https://www.cfr.org/interactives/time-kurds?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkumUvfTY5wIVEb7ACh3LAw-tEAAYASAAEgK7kvD_BwE" \l "!/time-kurds?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkumUvfTY5wIVEb7ACh3LAw-tEAAYASAAEgK7kvD_BwE)

# <https://www.cfr.org/about>

# Ariav’s Linked In.

# criticism of CFR: <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2019/10/council-on-foreign-relations-leonard-blavatnik-russia/>

# Source 20:

# Human Rights Watch, Restrictions on the Use of the Kurdish Language, Nd., Accessed May 14, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/turkey/turkey993-08.htm>

# Turkish is official language, Kurdish is probably 2nd biggest

# Kurdish not allowed in teaching, publishing, not allowed to be taught in university (even as a foreign language)

# Not allowed to use Kurdish in political campaigns or the idea of a Kurdish ethnic identity

# Source 21:

# Adem Uzun, “Living Freedom” The Evolution of the Kurdish Conflict in Turkey and the Efforts to Resolve It, Berghof Foundation, Berghof Transitions Series No. 11., 2014, <https://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Papers/Transitions_Series/transitions11_turkey.pdf>

# P 13 1980 military coup (Sept) a reaction to the activities of the newly formed PKK armed struggle (became popular and started to spread)

# Emergency state enacted in 1987 after the PKK armed attacks continued

# P 14 1990 Elected Kurdish MPs formed a new party, People’s Labour party and were outlawed, forcing the members to seek exile in Europe

# P 15 Turkish military used to attack Kurdish cities and cross the border into Iraq and Syria

# Result has been depopulation of villages and the concomitant migration of millions to larger cities

# P 16 1993 ceasefire between PKK and Turkey as political solutions began to be sought by both sides

# Ocalan’s reaction: “First of all, this process of ceasing fire has led to historical consequences; the ceasefire has started a new era. What is asked of us is to deepen this process. There is no doubt that our responsibilities are great. The Kurdish people are going through their roughest period in history. The Kurdish people have been subjected to persecution that has resulted in genocide and more. We never just took up arms for the sake of it. All we did was to open a road for our nation to freely develop. But we had no other means of struggle to adopt: that is why we had to take up arms and have brought the struggle to this stage. The Kurdish situation is, at heart, a Turkish-Kurdish situation. Our struggle has come to the point of the Turkish public accepting the Kurdish identity; it has seen it necessary to recognise Kurdish existence and solve the problem. [...]”

# P 17 war began again in after Turkish President Turgut Ozgul died under mysterious circumstances. PKK tried a number of ceasefires

# P 18 Ocalan, who had earlier fled to Lebanon, then Syria, was kicked out of Syria (because of Turkish troops massing on the border in an effort to pressure it to remove Ocalan in 1998), then went on an odyssey through a number of countries from 1998 to 1999 before being taken by Kenyan officials in Greece to an island in Turkey under the leadership of Turkish officials. No Europeans wanted him.

# P 19 protests ramped up in Turkey and Ocalan agreed to calm them

# P 20 “ Kurdish people have no friends but the mountains”

#

# Source 22:

# Joost Hiltermann, “The Kurds are Right Back Where They Started,” Oct. 31, 2017, *The Atlantic Monthly*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/history-of-the-kurds/544316/>

# For a century, Iraqi Kurds have repeatedly invested a disproportionate confidence in the United States to deliver them of the shackles of central control. The relationship dates back to the 1970s, when Mustafa Barzani sought Washington’s help against Iraq’s Baathist regime, after its strongman, Saddam Hussein, violated the Kurds’ understanding of an autonomy agreement signed in 1970. As Barzani returned to insurgency, the Kurds received support from the CIA, which found use in a proxy willing to counter the Soviet-backed Iraqi government. That support never included a promise to support anything beyond Kurdish autonomy inside Iraq, even when Barzani offered Washington access to the Kirkuk oil fields in case of victory.

# Source 23

# BBC News, Iraqi Kurdistan profile – Timeline, Oct. 31, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15467672>

**1958**- Overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy allows Kurdish nationalists to organise openly after many years in hiding. A new Iraqi constitution recognises Kurdish "national rights" and Mullah Mustafa Barzani returns from exile.

**1960**- Relations between the Iraqi government and Kurdish groups become strained. The KDP complains of increasing repression.

**1961**- KDP is dissolved by the Iraqi government after Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq.

## Autonomy granted

**1970**March - Iraqi government and the Kurdish parties agree a peace accord, which grants the Kurds autonomy. The accord recognises Kurdish as an official language and amends the constitution to state that: "the Iraqi people is made up of two nationalities, the Arab nationality and the Kurdish nationality."

**1971**August - Relations between the Kurds and the Iraqi government deteriorate. Mullah Mustafa Barzani appeals to the US for aid.

**1974**March - Iraqi government imposes a draft of the autonomy agreement and gives the KDP two weeks to respond. Mullah Mustafa Barzani rejects the agreement, which would have left the oilfields of Kirkuk under Iraqi government control, and calls for a new rebellion.

# Source 24

# ELIZABETH FERRIS and KIMBERLY STOLTZ, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION – UNIVERSITY OF BERN PROJECT ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT THE FUTURE OF KIRKUK: THE REFERENDUM AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPACT ON DISPLACEMENT, March 3 2008, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0303_iraq_ferris.pdf>

# P 1

# “During the Arabization campaigns, some 250,000 Kurds and other non-Arab minorities were displaced from this territory and replaced by Arabs from central and southern Iraq.”

# P5

# Oil was discovered here in 1927

# Source 25

# Inga Rogg and Hans Rimscha, “The Kurds as Parties to and Victims of Conflicts in Iraq”, International Review of the Red Cross, Volume 89 Number 868 December 2007, [file:///C:/Users/risa/Documents/York%20Mills/CHY4U/Unit%203/6\_New\_Social\_Movements\_Reform/irrc-868-4.pdf](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Crisa%5CDocuments%5CYork%20Mills%5CCHY4U%5CUnit%203%5C6_New_Social_Movements_Reform%5Cirrc-868-4.pdf)

# Pp827-828

# “The Iran–Iraq War Talabani’s newly founded PUK and the rival KDP resumed guerrilla activities in the late 1970s.7 Under the impact of the Iran–Iraq War (1980–8) and the temporary alliance of the Iraqi Kurdish parties with Teheran, Baghdad embarked on brutal repression and forcible resettlement campaigns in the rural areas.8 These intensified after the breakdown of new negotiations between the central government and the PUK in early 1984, and culminated in the 1988 Anfal campaign. Massive Iraqi armed and security forces took control of major areas that had been declared ‘‘forbidden zones’’ in 1987 and arrested all the inhabitants there, including women and children. At least 50,000, if not 100,000, persons perished either during the operations – partly conducted with chemical weapons – or in mass executions, or due to harsh conditions in detention camps.9 The most extensive acts of destruction took place in Tamim (Kirkuk) province. By the end of the 1980s, thousands of villages had been destroyed and hundreds of thousands of Kurds were massed together in government-controlled resettlement camps near the major cities. Eight years of war left a long-lasting and at times underestimated impact on all social and political players in Iran and Iraq. The Kurdish parties, defeated and pushed back to hideouts in the mountains, had to face the disastrous results of almost a decade of fighting. Except for the chemical weapons attack on Halabja in March 1988, the systematic destruction and persecution by the Iraqi government passed almost unnoticed by the international community; only human rights groups demanded that the government be held accountable. Nor had the Teheran government come to the rescue of its Iraqi-Kurdish allies when Baghdad launched its counter-insurgency campaign. Furthermore, that alliance, according to Kurdish critics and Iraqi opposition observers, had compromised the ethics and practice of the leaders and fighters. Iraqi government propaganda had portrayed the Kurdish parties, if not the Kurds as such, as ‘‘traitors’’ and ‘‘collaborators with the enemy’’. During the Anfal campaign, this took on a connotation of religious excommunication (takfir).10 Such propaganda, and the fact that the PUK and KDP had sided with Iran, had a considerable impact on the Iraqi population. A whole generation grew up immersed in the discourse of Iraqi heroism vs. the ‘‘treason and sabotage’’ of the opposition groups. Kurdistan was dropped from the official name of the ‘‘Autonomous Region’’, which was henceforth referred to as ‘‘the beloved North’’ (al-shimal al-habib), while the Anfal operations were officially commemorated.11”

# Source 26

# Lionel Beehner, “The Challenge in Iraq’s Other Cities: Kirkuk,” Council on Foreign Relations, June 30, 2006, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/challenge-iraqs-other-cities-kirkuk>.

# “Between the 1970s and 2003, Saddam uprooted more than 100,000 Kurds in his efforts to Arabize the city.”