

# AFRIN TIMES



Newroz 2026 • Issue 0



HERITAGE. IDENTITY. FUTURE.

# Contents

AFRIN TIMES  
Newroz 2026 – Issue 0

## **About Us :**

**Afrin Times: Meaning of the Name — Asaad Qaradaghi**

## **Religion :**

**Jews of Iranian Kurdistan — Dino Daniel**

## **Economics :**

**The Closure of the Strait of Hormuz: The Economic Nightmare Threatening to Drown the World in Recession and Famine — Dr. Castro Mansour**

**The Gulf and the Turn of Time — Peter Arendt**

## **Politics :**

**Debates in Iranian Kurdistan — Dr. Abbas Mansourian**

**Crucified Geography: The Political Realism — Marewan Flo**

**Rojhelat at the Crossroads: Politics, Development, and Stability in Iran's Kurdish Regions — Prof. Haidar Saify Nabiabad**

**Political Analysis: USA-Kurdistan Relations and Trust — Ahmad U. Naasan**

## **History :**

**Karim Khan Zand: A Pragmatic Reformer Amid Ruin and Reconstruction — Dr. Abbas Mansourian**

**The Identity of the Province of Urmia: Center and Base of Political Uprisings — Kaksar Oremar**

**Principality of Ilam — Marewan Flo**

## **Education :**

**Development of the Kurdish Language and Identity — Evin Xace**

## **Culture & Arts :**

**The Kurdish Dress: A Story of Identity, Memory, and Belonging — Lara Dizeyee**

**Eastern Kurdistan — Shadi Gholami**

**Sayyed Ali Asgher Kurdistan — Shlan Shawan**

## **Medicine :**

**The First Aid Book in the Kurdish Language and Its Importance to Kurdish Society — Zaradasht Baski**

## **Interviews :**

**Interview — Akram Naasan & Mustafa Abdi**

# IMPRESSUM



## About Us

AFRIN TIMES

Digital Quarterly Magazine

Publisher and Person Responsible for Content  
in accordance with Section 18 (2) MStV:

Akram Naasan

Thurbruchstr 3

D-17419 Dargen, Germany

Creative Direction & Magazine Design:

Lava Kasem

lavowark@gmail.com



Web Development & Digital Platforms:

Mustafa Abdi

mustefaebdi@gmail.com



Duty Editor:

Yahia Abou Assali

yahia-as@hotmail.com



Afrin Times is an independent research center dedicated to exploring the history and present of the Kurdish people. It highlights their intellectual, cultural, and civilizational contributions, while documenting their heritage and role in promoting coexistence and peace.

Contact:

Email: Akram.naasan@ruhr-uni-bochum.de

Publication Frequency: Quarterly  
(Digital)

Language: English

Disclaimer:

The content of this magazine is intended for journalistic, analytical, cultural, and social information purposes.

# Vision

To produce solid academic knowledge on Kurdish history, heritage, culture, and contemporary issues, and to publish research that documents their intellectual, political, and social contributions while promoting values of peace and coexistence.

# Mission

To become a trusted academic reference in Kurdish studies and a knowledge platform that fosters an objective understanding of the Kurdish role—historically and in the present—as an essential and active part of the region’s civilization.

# Values

- Academic independence
- Objectivity and neutrality
- Accuracy and documentation
- Openness and dialogue
- Respect for cultural diversity
- Commitment to the values of peace and human dignity

# Strategic Objectives

- Documenting Kurdish history across its various periods using diverse academic sources.
- Highlighting the civilizational and intellectual role of the Kurdish people in the region.
- Studying contemporary issues related to Kurdish society in their political, social, and cultural dimensions.
- Establishing a digital archive for documents, studies, and manuscripts related to the Kurdish people.
- Building research partnerships with academic institutions and regional and international research centers.
- Organizing academic conferences, seminars, and workshops.



# Meaning of the Linguistic and Etymological Context of Certain Words: "Afrîn" "Zar" and "Merî"

## Afrîn (Āfrîn)

From a historical and demographic perspective, Afrîn is considered the homeland of the ancestors of the Kurds, the Hurrians, the Hittites, the Mitanni, and the Phoenicians (Phoenicians), who migrated from the Taurus mountain range during the pre-Christian era and afterward as well.

## Some Derivations of the Word

The root of the word is **Āfr**, meaning Create.

**Āfa** means Creator.

In some cases, the initial letter **Ā** is shortened and pronounced as A.

Afraînde (Object)

For example:

Ez afrayndeî xudême

"I am the creator of my own work."

Afarîzraw: Creature (Object)

Afarandin: Creation

Tawafarandin: A phonetic variation of Afarandin.

(For example, pronunciation shifts may occur in spoken language due to phonetic evolution.)

Tawafarandin: Photosynthesis

(Photosynthesis is a fundamental biological process carried out by plants.)

The verbal noun derived from the root **Āfa** is Afrîn, meaning Creation.

Assad Qaradaghi is a Kurdish researcher and writer specializing in Kurdish linguistic and historical studies. He is known for his work on Kurdish etymology, the history of Kurdistan, and Kurdish cultural identity.

He has authored numerous studies and articles examining Kurdish language, heritage, and historical development through a scholarly and analytical approach.



# Linguistic Note

In the Kurdish language, letters such as Ayn, Qaf, Za, and similar sounds are considered foreign additions and do not belong to the original Kurdish alphabet. Consequently, many Kurdish words became Arabized over time, leading to phonetic alterations.

:Examples

Afrîn became Afrîn/Afrin •

Namêdî became 'Imadî •

Najm became 'Ajam •

:Likewise

Dağ became Talāgh, meaning a lofty mountain, such as Qeredağ, which means •  
.”. “the land” or “the mountain of the Kurds

## Conclusion

The word Afrîn is the verbal noun derived from the root meaning Creation. It is not a compound word but rather a unified lexical form whose letters function together as a single semantic unit and are not subject to further division.

## Editorial Note

The word Afrîn is the verbal noun derived from the root meaning Creation. It is not a compound word but rather a unified lexical form whose letters function together as a single semantic unit and are not subject to further division.



There are similar Kurdish words that follow the same pattern as Afrîn in their verbal noun form and are not divisible into smaller components. Examples include:

Şîrîn, Narmîn, Bengîn, Temrîn, Hemzîn, Şahîn, Rastîn, Befrîn, Hawîn, Zarîn, Rengîn, Sengîn, Zengîn, and others.

## **Nafrîn**

carries several related meanings, including creativity, innovation, admiration, and praise. It is used in expressions such as “Well done,” as a form of appreciation for a person who accomplishes or performs good work.

The eternal river of Afrîn, through its flowing waters, has become a historical symbol and a source of life, generosity, goodness, and blessing.

This word has also been Arabized in the form ‘Afram, a pronunciation that remains current in spoken language.

By contrast, the word Nafrîn in its Arabized form ‘Afrîn is understood to mean “curse.”

This sacred city was the homeland of the Prophet Ibrahim, his father Herzân, and Āba (meaning his paternal uncle Āzar), who is mentioned in the Torah as Abraham and in the Qur’an as Ibrahim. According to this interpretation, the region corresponds to northern and northeastern al-Sham (present-day Syria).

## **Linguistic Clarifications**

### **1. Afrîn**

In the Kurdish language, letters such as Ayn, Qaf, Za, and similar sounds are considered foreign additions and do not belong to the original Kurdish alphabet. Consequently, many Kurdish words became Arabized over time, resulting in phonetic alterations. Examples include:

- Agrî becoming ‘Aqra
- Namêdî becoming ‘Imadî
- Najm becoming ‘Ajam

Likewise:

- Dağ became Talāgh, meaning a lofty mountain, such as Qeretag, which means “the land of the Kurds” (Kurd land).
- Zar (grandfather’s grandfather) became Zafzāf, and similar examples.

## 2. Phoenicians

The Phoenicians, descendants of the Mitanni, derive their name from the word Fenîqî, which is regarded here as a Kurdish word that later became Arabized. The commonly used Greek form Phoenicia (Φοινίκη) refers to the color violet or purple, in reference to the famous purple dye for which they were renowned in both industry and trade.

The word for violet in Kurdish survives in several dialectal forms, including: Wenewşe, Venefşe, Benefşe

The Arabized form derives from the Kurdish original Arxewān, meaning purple.

## 3. Ibrahim

The name Ibrahim appears in the Qur'an (Surat al-An'ām 74):

“And when Ibrahim said to his Āba...”

The term Āba refers to an uncle or guardian figure. Its Kurdish equivalent is Apo. It is well known that the Holy Qur'an does not employ exact synonyms interchangeably; rather, it maintains precise distinctions between terms such as father, mother, parent, and guardian.



# Zār (Speech) and Some of Its Derivatives

The root Zār means speech, utterance, or eloquent language.

Bzāre: “Speak!” (imperative form).

Dezārêt: “He/She speaks.”

Dezārm (Ez dezārm): “I speak” (first-person form).

Zārinde: In the form of an adjective or object noun (Obj.).

Example:

Kesêkî zārinde ye – “He is an eloquent person.”

Zārā: “The speaker”; a feminine name associated with a feminine voice.

Zāaro: A masculine name associated with a masculine voice.

However, within linguistic usage, these terms do not indicate strict gender distinctions.

Zārok: In the Zazaki Kurdish dialect, an adjective referring to a young child, identified by voice or speech.

Zāaroḷe: In the Horamî Kurdish dialect, an adjective referring to a young child, likewise identified through voice or speech.

# Horamān

Horamān is a compound word formed from:

Hor = sun (light)

Mān = house or dwelling

When the two elements are combined, the meaning becomes “the House of the Sun,” symbolizing both sunrise and sunset.

There is a small town in the Horamān region called Xormāl (Hor + māl), located on the slopes of the Šāho mountain range. The name means “House of Light” or “House of the Sun.”

## Additional Derivatives

Zārīn: Sad speech; describing a sorrowful state.

Example: “He speaks sorrowfully,” or “a mournful voice.”

Zārīk: To lament, cry, or weep in grief.

Tengezār: Restricted or constrained speech.

A compound of:

Teng = narrow, restricted

Zār = speech

Together, the term means “restricted speech” or “limited expression.”

Zārnak: Bright, clear, or articulate speech.

Zār û Bêzār: Cheerful speech and distressed speech; joyful speech and sorrowful speech.

Zārāwe: A term (Term) referring to a linguistic expression or terminology.

Zārmend: One who possesses speech; an articulate speaker.

Zārst: Logic.

Zārstîy: The science of logic.

## Zār and Its Derivatives (Continued)

**Zārstmend:** A logician; one who possesses knowledge of logic.

A judge may bear this title in court because he is the master of speech and reasoning, capable of delivering the final judgment through eloquence and intellect.

**Zārstmendîy:** Mental logic; rational reasoning.

(Mend corresponds to the English word mind, meaning intellect or mental faculty.)

**Zārstāne (Zārstîyane):** Logically; in a logical manner.

**Zārdêšt:** A person of broad speech, eloquence, and abundant knowledge.

(The word Baqara in the Qur'an may be understood as a vessel of knowledge and wisdom, hence "the essence of knowledge.")

**Zārdêštîy:** The religion of Zārdêšt.

(Not to be confused with the foreignized form Zoroastrianism.)

**Nmekzār:** A person distinguished by eloquence and clarity of speech; literally, "one whose speech is open and expansive."

(The opposite form, Nmekram, signifies ingratitude or denial of blessings.)

## Gulzār

Gulzār = Gul + Zār

In Turkish usage, the compound conveys the meaning of "the blooming flower" or "the open blossom."

Gulê **Lāle:** Commonly known as the tulip (Tulips).

Its scientific designation is *Heraldisk lilja*.

**Lālezār:** Literally, "the field of blooming tulips" or "the open tulip garden."

## Zewiy û Zār

The root of Zewiy and Zār is “Za” or “Ze,” signifying life.

Zewiy or Zemîn means “the living earth.”

Hesarey zewiy refers to Planet Earth, literally “the Planet of Life.”

When the element Zār is attached to a place-name, it denotes a tract of fertile land cultivated with flowering plants, characterized by abundant buds and blossoms.

## Concluding Meaning of Zār

In all of its usages, Zār conveys the idea of:

- The opening or emergence of sound for all living beings.
- The blossoming and unfolding of flower buds and other plants.

Thus, the concept of Zār consistently carries the sense of expression, emergence, articulation, and flourishing life.

# Meadow (Mêrg) and Pasture (Lewêrgâ)

## Mêrg

is an ancient Kurdish word of original origin. The Arabic word marj (meadow) is considered an Arabized form of Mêrg and its derivatives.

In Arabic, marj refers to a wide, fertile land rich in vegetation, while mar'ā denotes a grazing area for livestock, with the plural form murūj. The term is commonly used to describe open, green natural meadows.

Among the Kurds, however, Mêrg and mar'ā represent two distinct concepts.

In Kurdistan, Mêrg refers to attractive natural landscapes filled with colorful flowers, beautiful vegetation, and blooming plants. Such places are often used for recreation, tourism, and relaxation. This type of scenic location is commonly called “Mêrg û zār.”

Many villages and localities bear names derived from this term, such as Mêrgesûr, Mêrgêpan, and others. These places are typically characterized by broad green expanses and lush natural scenery.

The Kurdish term Lewêrgâ (Pasture), on the other hand, refers specifically to land used for grazing livestock. Kurds traditionally use the mountain slopes near settlements as grazing grounds. Owing to the diversity of mountainous terrain and valleys, Kurdish possesses numerous synonymous terms for such areas, reflecting the richness of the language.

Examples include:

- Pawen
- Wert
- Cêrê
- Pelex
- Pawenge

These terms may vary in usage and nuance depending on the region and local dialect.

This distinction demonstrates that Mêrg signifies a scenic, flower-filled natural meadow, whereas Lewêrgâ designates land primarily intended for the grazing of animals.

# *The Kurds in Iran: Between Managed Stability and Strategic Latency*

## Abstract

This analysis examines the structural constraints and latent opportunities shaping the Kurdish question in Iran. It argues that the apparent stability of the Iranian state produces a controlled political environment in which Kurdish aspirations are contained but not eliminated, resulting in a condition best described as strategic latency rather than political resolution.

## Research Question

To what extent does regime stability in Iran constrain, shape, or delay Kurdish political mobilization and autonomy?

*Dino Daniel is a prominent Kurdish journalist and senior translator with more than twenty-five years of experience in journalism, media, and translation. He is widely recognized for his writings and analyses on Middle Eastern affairs and Kurdish issues, as well as for his efforts in building cultural and linguistic bridges between Kurdish and Israeli societies. He holds a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Baghdad and has also been active in historical research and linguistic editing. Alongside his journalistic career, he is currently working on several Kurdish–Hebrew linguistic and cultural publications, including translated books and language dictionaries.*



## 1. Introduction

The Kurdish question remains one of the most enduring minority issues in the Middle East, though it manifests differently across states. While Kurdish movements in Iraq and Syria have achieved varying degrees of autonomy, Kurds in Iran remain politically constrained. This divergence raises broader questions about the relationship between state resilience and minority political agency.



## 2 . Regime Stability as a Mechanism of Control

The Islamic Republic of Iran combines centralized ideological governance with a strong and adaptive security apparatus. This structure enables the state to manage ethnic peripheries, including Kurdish regions, through calibrated repression. Rather than pursuing total suppression—which could trigger escalation—the regime applies selective containment, limiting political organization while preventing large-scale insurgency.

## 3 . Kurdish Political Actors: Fragmented and Constrained



Kurdish political expression within Iran is largely externalized. Groups such as PJAK and the KDPI operate under significant strategic constraints. PJAK maintains low-intensity activity in border regions, while the KDPI primarily operates from exile, relying on diplomatic and political advocacy. Neither actor currently possesses the capacity to significantly alter Iran's internal power balance.

## 5 . Strategic Outlook: Stability Without Resolution

Absent major systemic shocks such as state fragmentation or regional war, the status quo is likely to persist. Kurdish identity in Iran remains socially resilient but politically constrained. This produces a condition of strategic latency: the persistence of political potential without immediate realization.



## 4 . Regional and International Determinants

The Kurdish question in Iran cannot be understood in isolation. It is embedded in a regional system shaped by Turkish security policy, Iraqi Kurdish autonomy, and fluctuating Iran–U.S. relations. Comparative cases suggest that Kurdish gains typically emerge in contexts of weakened central authority combined with external support—conditions not present in Iran today.



## Conclusion

Iran's state capacity ensures the maintenance of a controlled equilibrium in Kurdish regions. While this prevents both collapse and breakthrough, it also leaves the underlying political question unresolved. The Kurdish issue in Iran therefore remains dormant yet structurally embedded, dependent on future shifts in domestic or regional power dynamics.

# *The Closure of the Strait of Hormuz: The Economic Nightmare Threatening to Drown the World in Recession and Famine*

## *Energy and War*

*“War is an absolute evil, and every man who wages it tries to stifle the voice of conscience within himself.”*

*— Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace*

In the spring of 2026, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz became the largest supply shock to hit global energy markets in modern history. More than 10 million barrels of oil per day were halted, Brent crude surged above \$120 per barrel, and the repercussions began threatening the entire world economy with a full-scale recession.

*Dr. Castro Mansour*

*PhD in Political Economy*

*Strategic Banking Expert with over 25 years of extensive experience in both private and government banking sectors across the Middle East.*

*Specialized in economic and strategic research, risk management, and strategic planning. His expertise centers on:*

*Development of banking policies and regulatory frameworks*

*Credit risk, market risk, operational risk, and geopolitical risk assessment*

*Institutional strategy formulation and stress testing*

*Financial sustainability and long-term growth strategies in complex regional environments*

*Dr. Mansour combines deep academic insight in political economy with hands-on senior-level experience in banking strategy, risk governance, and corporate planning. This unique blend enables him to deliver integrated strategic solutions, risk-adjusted decision frameworks, and policy recommendations tailored to the dynamic economic, regulatory, and geopolitical challenges of the Middle East banking industry.*



# Gulf Littoral Economies: Country by Country

The eight countries bordering the Persian Gulf form the epicenter of this crisis. Before the war, they were pursuing ambitious diversification plans. Today, those gains have been dramatically reversed.

## United Arab Emirates

The most diversified economy in the region saw its non-oil growth halt abruptly due to airspace closures and soaring insurance costs, despite the Fujairah bypass pipeline.



## Qatar

The world's largest LNG exporter declared force majeure on shipments and has been forced to draw heavily on its sovereign reserves after near-total disruption of its aviation sector.

## Kuwait and Bahrain

Both face severe fiscal crises, compounded by direct threats to their desalination plants, which supply 99% of drinking water.



## Oman

Its ports have become ghost towns following the severance of its export routes.

## Iraq

Suffers the most severely due to sanctions, infrastructure damage, and the complete loss of its export capacity.

## Before and After: A Radically Divergent Economic Reality.

Before February 2026, Brent crude fluctuated between \$70 and \$80 per barrel. Today it has exceeded \$120, and the International Energy Agency has described the disruption as “the largest in history.”

“It is a global crisis. Everyone consumes energy... The poor and vulnerable countries are being hit dramatically hard.”

– Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund (April 2026)

## The Humanitarian Dimension

Food prices in the Gulf have risen between 40% and 120%, while 20,000 seafarers and 2,000 vessels remain stranded. Attacks on desalination facilities have raised fears of acute water shortages for millions. The United Nations has warned of cascading effects on global food security, with the crisis already pushing an additional 9.1 million people toward acute hunger.



## Ranking the Most Affected Countries

China (38% of Hormuz flows)

India

Japan and South Korea

European Importing Nations

Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asian Low-Income Economies

The Gulf Exporting Countries Themselves

## Scenario: Prolonged War – Enduring Global Strain

If the closure continues beyond the third quarter of 2026, oil prices could reach \$150 per barrel, with cumulative global economic losses exceeding \$3 trillion. The result would be worldwide stagflation, widespread corporate bankruptcies, and potential famines in vulnerable states.



# Scenario: War Ends – Regime Change or Decisive Peace

The only viable exits are two:

The fall of the Iranian regime, or

A decisive peace agreement backed by American support, including clear international guarantees for safe navigation and multinational naval patrols.

Both scenarios could restore price stability relatively quickly.

## Conclusion: A Neutral Outlook for the Global Economy (2026–2029)

The future of the world economy depends on how quickly this crisis is resolved. If the Strait reopens with strong international guarantees, recovery will be swift and global growth could return to around 3% by 2028. However, if the conflict drags on, it will leave deep scars: permanently higher energy costs, de-globalization of supply chains, and greater inequality between nations.

The Strait of Hormuz has reminded us once again that geography still rules economics.

The fateful question now is: Will the world act before this nightmare becomes a bitter reality?



# *The Gulf and the Turn of Time*

by : Peter Ardent

Former Senior German Military Officer  
and Expert in Strategic and Geopolitical  
Affairs



Israel and the USA have demonstrated their technological superiority against Iran and are attempting to leverage this into a negotiated outcome.

Following the attacks launched against Israel by its ally, Iran was not surprised by the counterstrike from the "Great Satan" and the "Little Satan." As expected, Iranian forces demonstrated that they can mount an asymmetric resistance against technological superiority—proving their capacity for endurance and their ability to absorb heavy losses. The Iranian Mullah regime had previously proven this capability during the Iran-Iraq War and has now revived that tradition. Moreover, the country's mountainous terrain does not lend itself to the kind of simple, rapid ground operations that would be required to disarm the Revolutionary Guards.

There was speculation that Israel and the U.S. intended to strike at Iran's political leadership in such a way that it would either give up or be forced to make concessions. Yet the regime has survived. The security forces did not defect, the opposition did not organize a coup, and the population did not rise up. Rather than hastening the collapse of the ruling class, the war has made the internal situation more complicated.

Furthermore, the ongoing executions in Iran reveal that the regime – which has lost all domestic legitimacy – is exploiting the external threat it itself provoked as a pretext to liquidate the opposition movement. This, too, was to be expected. The regime responded with brutal force to the protests that erupted following the death of Mahsa "Jina" Amini – a Kurdish-Iranian woman who died on September 16, 2022, while in the custody of Tehran's notorious "morality police." It reacted with similar severity to the nationwide protests triggered by the depreciation of the national currency (the rial), rampant inflation, and growing economic insecurity. Reports suggest that thousands of opposition activists have been killed. The Mullah regime has placed particular blame for this escalation on the USA and Israel. It remains difficult to assess the extent to which the regime is still under domestic political pressure.

In recent days, an end to the conflict with Iran appears – at least in the Western press – to be within tantalizing reach. However, US President Donald Trump himself continues to vacillate between hoping for a favorable deal and issuing threats of total annihilation should Tehran fail to act swiftly. From the perspective of U.S. President Donald Trump, the state of negotiations regarding a possible end to the war with Iran is not yet satisfactory. During a cabinet meeting at the White House, he reported on Iran's willingness to negotiate, even though the U.S. government is not yet satisfied with the offers. Trump reiterated the threat that the U.S. would either strike a deal or continue fighting, "finishing the job." The mere hope of an agreement is enough to trigger a positive reaction in the stock markets and send oil prices falling by four percent—demonstrating nothing so much as the acute vulnerability of an unprepared West.

The decision to take action against Iran exposes the limits of American power. In the case of Iran, airstrikes unaccompanied by ground troops—even if they inflict massive destruction—cannot impose one's full will upon a determined, religiously motivated adversary.

Here, too, the turn of time and the end of the American decades are becoming clear. Donald Trump's statement that the war against Iran is a success and will end quickly reflects more the hopes of the U.S. side than the reality on the ground. Military superiority without a viable political strategy usually ends up being resource- and cost-intensive—or worse. It almost always exposes strategic uncertainty.

The war with Iran has already severely depleted the U.S. arsenal. The U.S. think tank CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies) concludes that it would take at least three years to replenish stocks of three key weapons systems that were heavily used in the war with Iran. In the U.S., this assessment is fueling concerns that the military may not be sufficiently prepared for a potential future conflict with China.

According to the report, this affects Tomahawk cruise missiles, which are used for strikes deep into enemy territory, as well as Patriot and THAAD interceptor missiles for defending against enemy missiles and drones. Even if the U.S. reaches a good deal with Tehran, it will come at a very high cost.

The sanctions-hardened regime in Tehran appears to be pursuing a simple strategy. They will win this round if they can hold out longer than the U.S. They have been working toward this for years and are learning from past setbacks. The cells of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards operate in a decentralized manner, so that decapitation strikes cannot have as great an impact

Every small Iranian success against individual targets becomes a success for the regime. An agreement that allows the U.S. to declare itself the victor seems to be unlikely to be of much interest to the Iranian side. The nuclear component is not off the table. Neither staunch Islamists nor Russian strategists share Western reservations regarding these weapons.

If the U.S.—also with an eye toward the midterm elections in the U.S.—is likely willing to accept a deal that leaves this issue out of the equation, it remains Israel's stated goal to prevent the nuclear threat to Israel posed by Iran.

Within the anti-Western coalition of China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran, Iran is arguably the weakest member. While there has been no open support for Iran, it has received arms shipments.

The helplessness of the U.S. in this regard does not bode well for the near future. The support for Iran from this group is limited, but effective enough. Trump's hopes of turning China into a benevolent partner of the U.S.—including with regard to Iran—through deals involving aircraft and soybeans are likely to remain illusory, even though the closure of the Strait of Hormuz would also affect China's oil imports. American criticism of NATO's cautious approach and of the U.S.'s European allies is difficult. Even though the vital interests of Europeans are also at stake, NATO is and remains a defensive alliance. Furthermore, while Europeans have announced the end of their period of weakness, they have by no means implemented this yet. Effective support for the U.S. in this conflict is hardly conceivable given the capability profiles of the Europeans. At the same time, the dramatic urgency of restoring the European armed forces' ability to defend themselves must be viewed and assessed primarily in the context of Russian aggression.

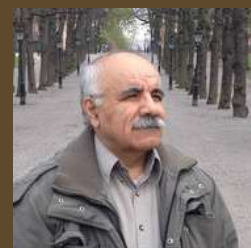
Military action is usually tied to economic imperatives. The Strait of Hormuz bottleneck demonstrates just how vulnerable the global economy is to blackmail. All it takes are modest means, such as drones, mines, and sporadic attacks—capabilities that are not easily taken away from an Iranian adversary. This applies not only to oil—although high oil prices and emergency releases of strategic reserves are striking—but also to shipments of urea, sulfur, and LNG, the raw materials for fertilizer production. The consequences thus affect the global economy and global food supply, while self-sufficient regions like communist China, North Korea, or Iran are far less impacted. We are witnessing a suspension of all rules. While some are making deals, others are preparing for what Vladimir Putin puts it: “The end of Western dominance.” The answer to this challenge is greater solidarity among the states and forces of a free and liberal world.

# *Political and Military Forces in Iranian Kurdistan (Rojhelat)*

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War led to the partition of Kurdistan into four parts. Iranian Kurdistan, similar to the regions located in Turkey, Iraq, and Syria, was incorporated into the orbit of newly formed capitalist nation-states. This era was characterized by the systematic denial of ethnic identities, political repression, and various forms of national oppression.

Historical documents show that the secret Sykes–Picot Agreement (1916) between Britain, France, and Tsarist Russia, followed by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), consciously ignored the Kurdish question. This “fourfold partition” was not a solution to a historical problem but was instead an attempt to deny and erase the Kurdish question itself. The natural response to these conditions was a struggle against national oppression, which transformed the “right to self-determination” into the central axis of political movements across all parts of Kurdistan.

*Dr. Abbas Mansourian is a writer, political analyst, and social activist. He is associated with the Woman, Life, Freedom movement and advocates democratic, council-based forms of self-administration. His writings focus on political developments in Iran and Kurdistan, questions of democracy, social justice, and national self-determination. Professionally, he specializes in epidemiology and community medicine, combining public health expertise with social and political engagement.*



# The British Project of a “Centralized Military State”

The developments of twentieth-century Iran were shaped by external state-building projects. After the February 1921 coup and the rise of Reza Khan, who was a Cossack officer, Britain advanced the consolidation of centralized state power by recognizing his authoritarian and militaristic potential. General Edmund Ironside, the commander of British forces in Iran, played a decisive role in guiding Reza Khan’s military ascent.

The strategy behind this policy was to create a national army and a centralized bureaucracy to secure imperial interests and contain Bolshevik influence. This process came at the expense of suppressing ethnic communities, including Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Sistan-Baluchis, Turkmens, and Arabs. With the proclamation of Reza Khan as king in 1925, which was supported by the Qom clergy under the doctrine that “the Shah is the shadow of God,” policies of cultural homogenization and structural marginalization in peripheral regions became institutionalized.

## The Consolidation of Security Dictatorship

The second major turning point in the suppression of democracy and national rights was the 1953 coup against the national government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh. This coup, which was organized with the direct involvement of the intelligence services of the United States (CIA) and Britain (MI6), consolidated the authoritarian rule of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. If the coup had failed and the Shah had been removed, the later rise of Khomeinism would likely not have been possible.



The coup was carried out under the military leadership of General Fazlollah Zahedi, who relied on hired street mobs and received political support from segments of the clergy. This included networks associated with Behbahani and Kashani, both of whom benefited from substantial financial backing. The result was a political deadlock that reinforced authoritarian rule.

A strategic consequence of this process was the intensification of security control in border and ethnic regions. The ethnic groups of Iran were not only deprived of political participation but were also relegated to a center-periphery order where their share of development became structural underdevelopment. Class oppression rooted in dependent, oil-based comprador capitalism merged with national oppression. This produced a form of internal colonialism characterized by the extraction of natural resources and the destruction of local ecosystems.

## **Administrative Divisions after the Rise of Political Islam in 1979**

Central governments have historically attempted to weaken Kurdish regions through geographical fragmentation. After the 1979 revolution, the security logic of administrative divisions continued. Kurdish society was dispersed across four provinces:

1. Kurdistan Province
2. West Azerbaijan Province
3. Kermanshah Province
4. Ilam Province

This fragmentation prevented the formation of a unified administrative-political unit capable of advancing broad national demands. The presence of large Kurdish populations in northern Khorasan, specifically in Quchan, Shirvan, and surrounding areas, was also the result of forced relocations during earlier historical periods, particularly under the Safavid dynasty and Nader Shah Afshar.

These relocations aimed to use Kurds as a human defensive buffer along the borders while keeping them under the authority of local tribal chiefs and feudal lords. The underlying goal of this policy was to separate Kurds from their homeland and gradually assimilate them into the constructed identity of the Iranian nation.

# Kurdish Political Parties in Iran

At present, Kurdish political organizations in Iran can broadly be categorized into three main tendencies:

1. Nationalist / independence-seeking currents
2. Autonomy-oriented or federalist movements
3. Leftist socialist movements—generally supporting the right of peoples to self-determination and advocating solidarity among the peoples of Iran and the region, often with a council-based (communal) orientation.

Many of these parties became active following the 1979 revolution, and several of them are currently based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

## Komala

Komala appeared in the late 1970s from networks of Kurdish student circles and leftist activists influenced by socialist ideas. From the outset, the organization sought to frame the Kurdish national question in connection with class struggle and the social emancipation of the working classes.

In the revolutionary atmosphere of 1979, these political networks established lasting ties with workers, artisans, and the urban and rural poor. Following the collapse of the monarchy, the organization publicly announced its existence in the winter of 1979 under the name Revolutionary Organization of the Toilers of Kurdistan, or Komala, and quickly became one of the decisive political forces in Kurdistan.



During the early years following the revolution, Komala played a dual role. On one hand, it helped organize popular structures and local councils; on the other, it organized Peshmerga forces to defend areas under its influence. In Sanandaj, neighborhood councils known as Bankehhs became some of the earliest examples of council-based grassroots organizations established after the revolution.

Only a few months after the rise of political Islam to power, in August 1979, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a decree of jihad against Kurdistan, accompanied by widespread massacres. This marked the beginning of a new phase of popular resistance. Military operations by the army, revolutionary committees, and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps intensified in order to recapture Kurdish cities and suppress political organizations. Under these conditions, Komala organized Peshmerga forces and resisted the offensive, maintaining control over several towns and many rural areas for months.

Kurdistan during this period also became a refuge and stronghold for radical political forces opposed to the government, forces that were being severely repressed in other parts of Iran. The eight-year war between the governments of Iran and Iraq also served as a mechanism to suppress and contain social movements, including women's, student, and workers' movements, as well as the struggles of the people across Iran, particularly in Kurdistan.

Komala's activities were not limited to military resistance. The organization also played an important role in the formation of social institutions. Among these initiatives was the establishment of the Peasants' Union, founded by Fouad Mostafa Soltani and beginning in Marivan, later expanding to other areas. These unions played a significant role in confronting the remnants of the feudal landlord-peasant system and in organizing impoverished farmers.

At the same time, a network of councils and social organizations emerged in Kurdish cities. The active participation of women in the political and military structures of Komala was a notable characteristic of this period. Starting in the early 1980s, women not only participated in political activities but also joined the armed struggle within Peshmerga units.

# The Formation of the Communist Party of Iran and Splits within Komala

On 2 September 1983, Komala, together with several political circles and activists who had split from other socialist organizations across Iran, founded the Communist Party of Iran. Within this framework, Komala continued its activities under the name “Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran”, while maintaining its own internal organizational structure. From 1983 onward, its forces were based in border areas and later in bases within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The War between Komala and the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (1984–1988) One of the most tragic chapters in the modern history of Iranian Kurdistan was the armed conflict between Komala and the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) during the mid-1980s. In September 1984, the KDPI’s central committee declared a full-scale war against Komala.

Within Komala’s leadership, there were differing views. A dominant faction interpreted the conflict as a struggle over political and class hegemony, while another tendency argued that the primary focus should remain on the struggle against the Islamic Republic. Meanwhile, internal disputes within the KDPI also led to splits, producing factions known as the “Revolutionary Leadership” and the “Eighth Congress” group.

Eventually, in May 1988, Komala announced the end of the internal conflict, citing responsibility toward the Kurdish movement and the need to concentrate on the broader struggle against the Islamic Republic. This internal war left heavy consequences, including killings, deep social and political divisions, and waves of migration and dispersion among activists.

## Split within the Communist Party of Iran – Komala

During the period of retreat and camp-based existence, internal disagreements within the Communist Party of Iran intensified. In November 1991, a group of party cadres formed a new organization called the Worker-Communist Party of Iran, while the remaining leadership continued under the same name, maintaining the Communist Party of Iran and its Kurdistan branch (Komala) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The Worker-Communist Party of Iran itself later experienced another split, leading to the formation of two separate parties:

- Worker-Communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist
- Hekmatist Party (Official Line)

# Komala – Revolutionary Organization of the Toilers of Kurdistan

From the late 2000s, disagreements over the assessment of Iran’s political situation, strategies of struggle, and the relationship between political activity, opposition alliances, and Peshmerga warfare led to the emergence of several factions using the historical name Komala. As a result, the name “Komala” became a shared legacy among multiple organizations with a common origin but divergent political paths.

## Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan

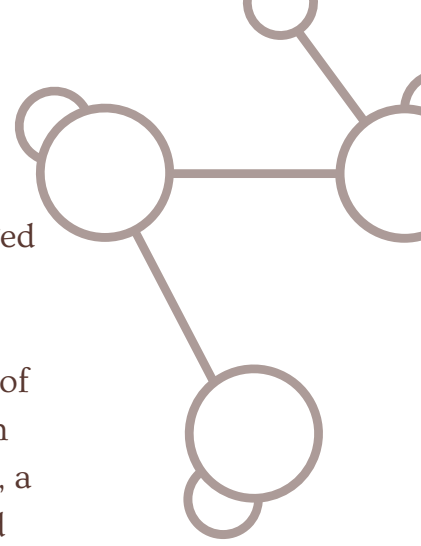
With changes in the regional political environment and the establishment of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, strategic disagreements deepened. In 2000, a group of Komala leaders—including Abdullah Mohtadi, Omar Ilkhanizadeh, and Reza Kaabi—argued that the Communist Party’s framework no longer corresponded to the new political horizons in Iranian Kurdistan. They separated and established the Revolutionary Organization of the Toilers of Kurdistan. In 2006, this organization adopted the name Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan and continued its activities with a social-democratic orientation.



# Komala of Kurdistan Toilers

In 2008, following a violent internal dispute, another faction emerged under the name Komala of Kurdistan Toilers, led by Omar Ilkhanizadeh.

After years of separate activity, this group joined the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan on 19 November 2022. However, the reunification proved short-lived. Disagreements resurfaced, and on 20 June 2023, a section of the cadres announced the failure of the unity process and declared the continuation of independent activity, appointing Reza Kaabi as secretary-general and Fariba Mohammadi as spokesperson.



## Two Komalas and Two Communist Parties of Iran

Due to organizational and ideological disputes, another split occurred within the Communist Party of Iran in 2020, resulting in two separate parties with the same name. In both cases, the Kurdistan branch continued to operate under the historical name “Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran (Komala).”

On one side of this division stands the faction led by Ebrahim Alizadeh, who serves as Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Iran and leader of its Kurdistan organization. On the other side stands another Communist Party of Iran led by Salah Mazouji, whose Kurdistan branch also operates under the name Komala.

Both organizations currently maintain separate headquarters and bases in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. As a result, today, two parties, the Communist Party of Iran, and two organizations, Komala, exist within the political landscape of Iranian Kurdistan, each claiming to represent the legacy and historical tradition of the original Komala movement.



# Council for Cooperation of Left and Communist Forces in Kurdistan

This council was established in 2022 during a conference in Stockholm with the aim of strengthening cooperation and coordination among communist and left-wing parties and activists in Kurdistan. Its declared objectives include supporting the struggles of workers, women, and other social movements in Kurdistan and opposing the Islamic Republic.

The long-term horizon of this cooperation is the creation of a left and socialist alternative based on council democracy and popular self-management, transferring the administration of society to councils of workers, laborers, and ordinary people rather than party rule. The cooperation involves the Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran (Komala), the Kurdistan Committee of the Worker-Communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist, and a number of left- and communist-activists.

## Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI)

The KDPI was founded in 1945, at the end of the Second World War, in the city of Mahabad under the leadership of Qazi Muhammad. The party emerged amid the presence of the Red Army in northern Iran and the establishment of the Azerbaijan People's Government led by Ja'far Pishevari. With a Kurdish nationalist orientation, the party aimed to end national oppression against the Kurdish people.

During this period, the Republic of Kurdistan was proclaimed in Mahabad. However, following the withdrawal of the Soviet Red Army and the Shah's military advance, both the Azerbaijani and Kurdish popular governments were left isolated. The central government seized this opportunity to crush both movements. As a result, Qazi Muhammad, Saif Qazi, and several leaders of the Mahabad Republic were executed by hanging in 1947 in Mahabad's Chahar-Cheragh Square.

After the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the KDPI entered a new and decisive phase under the leadership of Abdulrahman Ghassemlou, a prominent political figure and diplomat. The party adopted the strategic slogan "Democracy for Iran, Autonomy for Kurdistan."



In 1989, during negotiations with representatives of the Islamic Republic in Vienna, Ghassemlou was assassinated. He had approached the negotiations with a peaceful outlook and optimism regarding the government’s promises of a political settlement, unaware that the talks had been organized as a trap. While secretly meeting with Iranian representatives—who were in fact a death squad—he was shot and killed in the negotiation room. The assassination delivered a severe shock to the party and the Kurdish movement.

After Ghassemlou’s death, the party reorganized under the leadership of Sadegh Sharafkandi. Sharafkandi was also assassinated by agents of the Islamic Republic in September 1992 at the Mykonos restaurant in Berlin, while participating in a gathering of the Socialist International. The assassination led to one of the most historic judicial rulings in Europe, officially implicating senior Iranian officials—including Ali Khamenei—in extraterritorial political assassinations.

After approximately 16 years of internal division, the KDPI finally achieved reunification in summer 2022, when its two main factions merged into a single organization under the leadership of Mustafa Hijri. Today, the KDPI is one of the principal members of the Cooperation Center of Iranian Kurdistan Parties and part of the six-party coalition formed following the January 2026 PJAK initiative.



## Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK)

The Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK) was founded in 2006 and has become one of the more militarily visible Kurdish organizations. Unlike the KDPI, which advocates autonomy within Iran, PAK openly calls for full independence and the creation of an independent Kurdish state, rejecting federal models for Iran as insufficient. The leader of the party is Hussein Yazdanpanah.



## Khabat Organization of Iranian Kurdistan

The Khabat Organization of Iranian Kurdistan emerged with a national-religious orientation and, on 26 June 1980, entered the post-revolutionary political arena as a counterweight to the dominance of left currents and secular nationalist forces. It represented a response from a segment of the religious community that nevertheless drew a clear boundary against leftist worldviews, and it organized its forces under the slogan “Peshmerga and Muslim.” The organization’s founding role was primarily associated with Sheikh Jalal Hosseini; after him, leadership passed to his son Kak Baba Sheikh Hosseini. At the level of Iran’s opposition politics, Khabat has also maintained cooperation with the National Council of Resistance of Iran (Mojahedin-e Khalq).

# *Crucified Geography: The Kurds Between the Hammer of International Agreements and the Anvil of Political Realism*

From Sèvres to Today: The Repetition of Tragedy Across Başûr, Bakur, Rojhelat, and Rojava

The Kurdish dilemma in contemporary political consciousness manifests itself as a tragic repetition of history. Yet this recurrence is not arbitrary; rather, it is the outcome of an international system designed to reproduce dependency and entrench marginalization. It is no longer sufficient to interpret the Kurdish reality solely through the lens of the Treaty of Lausanne (1923). A more accurate perspective begins with the Treaty of Sèvres (1920), the foundational moment in which the most ambitious Kurdish aspiration for an independent state was first formally recognized—only to be buried, and then reburied three years later at Lausanne under decisive Turkish pressure.

The current landscape makes it evident that, despite the immense sacrifices made by the Kurds in confronting terrorism and authoritarianism, they remain trapped in a zone of “strategic loss,” with their cause held hostage to shifting international interests and regional power struggles.

*Marwan Filo is a Kurdish writer and researcher specializing in political, economic, and historical affairs. His work focuses on geopolitical developments in the Middle East and their impact on regional societies and economies. He combines strategic analysis with historical perspectives, with particular interest in energy, security, and economic stability. Through his articles and research, he seeks to provide objective insights that connect historical context with contemporary developments while exploring future challenges and opportunities facing the region.*



The failure of the Treaty of Sèvres was not merely an accidental episode in diplomatic history; rather, it constituted an early declaration of a persistent principle: great powers do not grant national rights unless doing so serves their strategic interests. This principle continues to shape Kurdish realities today across all four parts of Kurdistan: Iraqi Kurdistan (Başûr), Turkish Kurdistan (Bakur), Iranian Kurdistan (Rojhelat), and Syrian Kurdistan (Rojava).

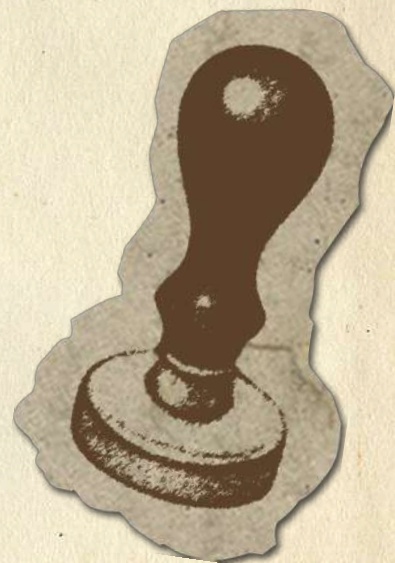
## 1 . The Curse of History — From Sèvres to Lausanne, and Beyond

In August 1920, the victorious Allied powers of World War I signed the Treaty of Sèvres with the Ottoman Empire.

Articles 62 and 64 provided for Kurdish autonomy, with the possibility of independence.

Historian David McDowall described this as “the nearest the Kurds have ever come to achieving their national aspirations through international recognition.” Yet within just three years, the balance of power shifted: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk secured military and diplomatic victories, culminating in the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), which erased all references to Kurdish rights.

What transpired between Sèvres and Lausanne was not merely a change in agreements, but a condensed model of how the international system treats non-dominant nationalities: instrumentalized in moments of need, then traded away during political settlements.



This same pattern is replicated today in Astana, Geneva, and Washington, where Kurdish actors often

find themselves as bargaining chips in negotiations they do not control

Moreover, subsequent League of Nations decisions—particularly regarding Mosul and Kirkuk

in the 1920s—integrated Kurdish-majority areas into Iraq and Turkey without popular

referenda, reinforcing a lasting principle: borders are drawn by great powers, not by peoples.

## **2 . Başûr — Iraqi Kurdistan Between Incomplete Federalism and Existential Crisis**

### **A. From Anfal to the Constitution**

Kurdish history in Iraq is marked by extreme violence and vulnerability—from the Anfal

campaign (1986–1989), described by Human Rights Watch as “a genocidal campaign

against the Kurdish population,

” to the chemical attack on Halabja in 1988, and the

establishment of a safe zone in 1991 following the March uprising. History here was written.

in Kurdish blood

The fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 created a rare opportunity. The 2005 Iraqi Constitution

recognized federalism, granting the Kurdistan Region significant powers, including armed

forces (Peshmerga), a parliament, and authority over oil contracts. However, the trap lay in

the details: Article 140, concerning disputed territories such as Kirkuk, remains unimplemented to this day .

## **B. The Collapse of Peace and Militarization**

The 2013–2015 peace process between the Turkish government and the PKK offered hope but collapsed in 2015, leading to widespread urban warfare in Kurdish cities such as Diyarbakır and Nusaybin. Entire areas were devastated, and tens of thousands were displaced. Militarization did not reflect the impossibility of a political solution but rather its rejection.

Turkey's role in NATO, its EU accession ambitions, and its regional interventions complicate international responses, leaving Kurdish rights subject to double standards.

# **4 . Rojhelat — Iranian Kurdistan Under Repression and Marginalization**

## **A. Structural Exclusion**

Kurds in Iran—numbering between 8 and 12 million—face systemic repression: security crackdowns, economic neglect, and cultural restrictions. Unlike Iraq or even Turkey, they lack institutional recognition or meaningful political representation.

The phenomenon of kolbars—porters carrying goods across mountainous borders, often under direct fire—epitomizes this marginalization. Amnesty International has condemned such actions as “an appalling disregard for human life.”

## **B. Political Movements and Containment**

Kurdish parties in Iran have faced systematic assassinations, including the 1992 Mykonos restaurant killings in Berlin. A German court directly implicated the Iranian state, describing the act as evidence of organized state terrorism.

# 5 . Rojava — Between Political Experimentation and International Betrayal

## A. A Political Experiment Amid War

Following the Syrian uprising in 2011 and the withdrawal of regime forces in 2012, Kurdish groups established a unique system of governance based on decentralized democracy, gender equality, and multi-ethnic representation. David Graeber called it “one of the most remarkable political experiments of the 21st century.”

## B. Partnership and Abandonment

Kurdish-led forces were instrumental in defeating ISIS, sacrificing over 11,000 fighters. Yet, as former U.S. envoy Brett McGurk noted, the United States relied on them militarily while failing to provide political guarantees.

The 2019 U.S. withdrawal enabled Turkish military operations, leading to mass displacement and territorial losses—another chapter in a recurring pattern of tactical alliance followed by strategic abandonment.

# 6 . The Political Trap — Interests Over Justice

The Kurdish question reveals a harsh truth: international politics does not recognize historical suffering as a sufficient basis for rights. Recognition is granted not on moral grounds, but on strategic utility.

Three structural challenges persist:

- Geographic and political fragmentation across four states
- Internal ideological and partisan divisions
- Overreliance on single external powers without diversified alliances.

# 7 . Toward a Kurdish Strategy in a Reconfigured World

## A. Unity Within Diversity

A coordinated Kurdish political framework across all regions is essential to strengthen diplomatic leverage.

## B. Converting Military Capital into Legal Gains

Sacrifices must be translated into documented legal claims presented in international forums.

## C. Expanding Non-Traditional Alliances

Engagement with diasporas, NGOs, and emerging global actors can broaden support networks.

## D. Building a Civilizational Project

A viable Kurdish state project must demonstrate governance capacity and offer a compelling model of partnership—not merely a claim to historical justice.



# Conclusion: Breaking the Sèvres Cycle

The Kurdish cause is not a plea for sympathy, but the cause of a people with the demographic, geographic, and historical capacity to be a strategic actor. Escaping the recurring cycle of Sèvres–Lausanne–betrayal requires first a unified Kurdish will and then international alignment.

History has shown that military courage alone does not build states, and moral claims alone do not secure recognition. What is required is a comprehensive national strategy—legal, diplomatic, economic, and cultural—that presents the Kurdish cause as a constructive global partnership.

Only then will history cease to repeat itself.



# Rojhelat at the Crossroads: Politics' Development' and Stability in Iran's Kurdish Regions



Dr. Haidar Saify Nabiabad is a professor of Medical Biotechnology at Rojava University. He was born in Sanandaj, Kurdistan, Iran. His academic and research career is dedicated to advancing the fields of genetics, nanotechnology, biotechnology, and drug design. With a strong interdisciplinary background, his work focuses on the analysis of genetic disorders and drug delivery systems. As an academic leader, he has played an important role in fostering scientific collaboration and strengthening higher education and research institutions in the region. He continues to contribute to regional and international scientific initiatives, with a focus on innovation, sustainability, and the responsible application of emerging technologies.



## • Abstract

This study examines the political, economic, geographic, and cultural dynamics of the Kurdish regions of Iran, commonly referred to in Kurdish discourse as Rojhelat (Eastern Kurdistan). Located along Iran's western frontier and dominated by the Zagros Mountain System, the region occupies a strategically significant position bordering Iraq, Turkey, and Azerbaijan's Nakhchivan region. The study explores how geography, historical developments, demographic diversity, and state policies have shaped the contemporary conditions of Kurdish communities in Iran. It analyzes key dimensions including political mobilization, economic development, natural resources, education, cultural life, and regional geopolitics. While Rojhelat possesses significant environmental resources, strategic trade corridors, and growing educational institutions, it continues to face structural challenges such as uneven development and tensions surrounding cultural and political representation. The article examines the historical roots of Kurdish political movements, from tribal autonomy and early nationalist movements to contemporary political coalitions, and situates them within Iran's broader national framework. By integrating geographical, historical, and socio-political perspectives, the study highlights the region's dual role as both a peripheral frontier and a critical geopolitical corridor. In conclusion, the future stability and prosperity of Rojhelat will depend on balanced approaches to regional development, political inclusion, and cultural recognition within Iran's multiethnic society.

Keywords: Rojhelat, Eastern Kurdistan, Iran

# 1. Introduction

The Kurdish regions of Iran—often referred to by Kurdish political discourse as Rojhelat or Eastern Kurdistan—constitute one of the four major Kurdish-populated regions of the Middle East, alongside those in Turkey, Iraq, and Syria (McDowall, 2004; Entessar, 2010). These regions span several western Iranian provinces including Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and Ilam, as well as parts of West Azerbaijan, Hamadan, North Khorasan, and Lorestan (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** . Location of Kurdish-inhabited regions in western Iran. The area commonly referred to as Rojhelat includes the provinces of Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Ilam, and Kurdish-populated areas of West Azerbaijan, Hamadan, North Khorasan and Lorestan. These regions lie along Iran’s western frontier bordering Iraq, Turkey and Azerbaijan’s Nakhchivan region and are dominated by the Zagros Mountain System.

Kurds constitute approximately 10–17% of Iran’s population, making them the country’s third-largest ethnic group after Persians and Azeris (Minority Rights Group International, 2023). Rojhelat occupies an important place in Iran’s political geography due to its strategic location along the borders with Iraq, Turkey, and Azerbaijan’s Nakhchivan region, as well as its position within the Zagros mountain corridor, which has historically shaped patterns of settlement, security, and political interaction. The region has long served as a center of Kurdish political mobilization and contains considerable cultural and linguistic diversity (Romano, 2006). However, despite these

geographical and social advantages, it has faced persistent political tensions and developmental disparities that Kurdish activists and scholars often attribute to centralized governance structures and restrictions on cultural autonomy.

This article explores Rojhelat's contemporary condition across geography, politics, economics, culture, education, and development, highlighting the tensions between regional identity and national integration.



## 2. Geographic Foundations of Rojhelat

### 2.1 The Zagros Landscape

The physical geography of Rojhelat is dominated by the Zagros Mountains (Figure 2), which cover approximately 90% of the region's terrain (Gunter, 2011).

**Figure 2.** The Zagros Mountains extend approximately 1,500 km from northwestern Iran to the Persian Gulf. The mountain system forms the geographic backbone of Kurdish regions in Iran and has historically influenced settlement patterns, agriculture, and political autonomy.

This mountainous environment shapes several aspects of regional life, including settlement distribution, transportation infrastructure, agricultural production, and security and political dynamics. Because of the rugged terrain, villages are often scattered and transportation networks are more difficult and costly to develop, which also limits large-scale farming and encourages smaller, localized agricultural practices. Historically, these mountains allowed Kurdish communities to preserve semi-autonomous tribal structures and cultural independence, while the

## 2.2 Environmental Resources

Annual rainfall in many parts of the Zagros region ranges between 300 and 600 mm, which is higher than many central Iranian areas. This precipitation supports forests, rangelands, and agriculture production in valleys and plains (Kreyenbroek & Sperl, 1992). Rojhelat's natural resources include fertile valleys suitable for wheat cultivation, forest ecosystems that support livestock grazing, freshwater from mountain snowmelt, and rich biodiversity within the Kurdo-Zagrosian ecological zone. These resources create opportunities for agriculture, eco-tourism, and renewable energy development. The region contains diverse ecosystems including forests, wetlands, mountains, and grasslands that support rich biodiversity, including thousands of plant species, mammals such as wolves, bears, and leopards, and many migratory birds in the wetlands (Kreyenbroek & Sperl, 1992). For example, the Arasbaran forests (figure 3) contain more than 775 plant species and are recognized as a UNESCO biosphere reserve.



**Figure 3.** Arasbaran forest located in East Azerbaijan Province, Iran, is a UNESCO biosphere reserve that hosts over 775 plant species and diverse wildlife, illustrating the ecological richness of Rojhelat and its potential for conservation and eco-tourism (Kreyenbroek & Sperl, 1992)

Water resources in Rojhelat mainly come from mountain precipitation and snowmelt, with rivers originating in the Zagros Mountains supplying water for agriculture, drinking, and hydroelectric power. Important water bodies include Lake Urmia, Lake Zarivar in Kurdistan Province (Figure 4)—a freshwater lake supporting irrigation, fishing, and tourism—as well as reservoirs regulated by major dams such as Shahid Kazemi Dam and Azad Dam used for irrigation, water storage, and hydroelectric power generation.



**Figure 4.** Important water bodies include Lake Urmia (left) and Lake Zarivar (right)

### 3. Demography and Provincial Overview

Population distribution in Rojhelat is mainly Kurdish and in some regions it is uneven and ethnically mixed, with Kurdish majorities in some provinces and mixed Kurdish–Azeri or Kurdish–Lur populations in others (Table 1).

**Table 1: Major Provinces of Rojhelat**

Province	Capital	Population (approx.)	Ethnic Composition	Economic Features
<b>Kurdistan</b>	Sanandaj	~1.6 million	Predominantly Kurdish	Agriculture, trade
<b>Kermanshah</b>	Kermanshah	~2 million	Kurdish majority	Industry, border trade
<b>Ilam</b>	Ilam	~600,000	Kurdish (Feyli)	Oil, agriculture
<b>West Azerbaijan (partial)</b>	Urmia	~3 million	Kurdish–Azeri mix	Agriculture, commerce
<b>Hamadan (partial)</b>	Hamadan	~1.7 million	Kurdish–Lur and others	Agriculture
<b>Lorestan (partial)</b>	Khorramabad	~1.8 million	Lur–Kurdish	Livestock

North and Northeast Iran	Bojnord	~1.5	Kurds-Turkman
--------------------------	---------	------	---------------

Across the broader region, estimates suggest 9–11 million Kurds live in Iran, though precise numbers remain politically sensitive.

## 4. Historical and Political Development

Before the twentieth century, Kurdish society in Iran was primarily tribal and semi-autonomous. Local chieftains often governed mountainous regions with limited interference from the central state (McDowall, 2004). During the late Qajar period (19th–early 20th century), weak central authority allowed Kurdish tribes to maintain relative independence. However, this autonomy gradually declined as Iran attempted to modernize and centralize its administration.

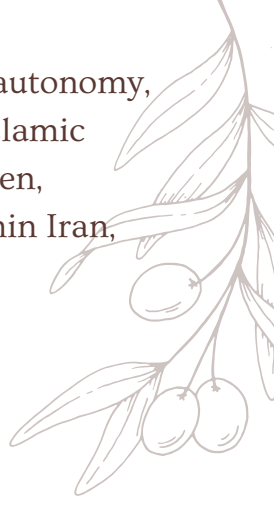
The rise of Kurdish nationalism in the early twentieth century was driven by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, the spread of ethnic nationalism in the Middle East, increased centralization in Iran, and economic changes in Kurdish society, all of which strengthened Kurdish collective identity and political mobilization.

One of the earliest major Kurdish rebellions in Iran was the revolt led by tribal leader Ismail Agha Simko Shikak against the Qajar state. The uprising attempted to challenge Iranian authority in the northwestern Kurdish regions.

With the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty (1925), the Iranian government pursued aggressive centralization and nation-building policies. These reforms aimed to integrate peripheral regions but often suppressed minority identities. Kurdish identity in Iran predates the modern Iranian state, with Kurdish dynasties and principalities ruling parts of the region during the medieval period.

Modern Kurdish nationalism emerged in the early twentieth century amid the collapse of imperial structures in the Middle East. One defining historical moment was the Republic of Mahabad, which briefly established a Kurdish autonomous state in northwestern Iran in 1946 (McDowall, 2004). Although the republic lasted less than a year, it remains a powerful symbol of Kurdish political aspirations.

Following the Iranian Revolution, Kurdish political groups demanded regional autonomy, linguistic rights, and decentralized governance, but negotiations with the new Islamic Republic of Iran collapsed, leading to armed conflict in the early 1980s. Since then, Kurdish politics in Iran have diversified into three main strands—autonomy within Iran, federal democratic reform, and independent Kurdish statehood—although most contemporary Kurdish parties now emphasize federalism and democratic decentralization.



## 5. Contemporary Political Dynamics

The relationship between Kurdish communities and the Iranian state remains complex, as Kurds participate in national politics and local governance while many activists argue that structural inequalities persist in areas such as language rights, economic investment, and political representation. International observers also report periodic arrests of activists and restrictions on cultural expression in Kurdish regions.

Kurdish regions have often served as centers of political mobilization, particularly during nationwide protests (Romano, 2006). The 2022 “Women, Life, Freedom” movement—sparked by the death of Kurdish woman Jina Amini—originated partly in Kurdish cities before spreading across Iran (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Analysts argue that ethnic minority regions may play a key role in shaping future political transformations in Iran.

Several political movements advocate Kurdish rights in Iran. The situation of Kurdish political organizations in Rojhelat in 2026 remains active but complex. They are politically more unified than before, yet militarily limited and under strong pressure from Iran.

In February 2026, several major Kurdish parties—including the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI), Kurdistan Freedom Party, Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK), Organization of Iranian Kurdistan Struggle, and Komala of the Toilers of Kurdistan, later joined by the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan—formed the Coalition of Political Forces of Iranian Kurdistan to coordinate Kurdish political strategy, oppose the Iranian government, advocate for self-determination or federal autonomy, and increase cooperation between armed wings and political parties. This historic step marked a significant shift, as Kurdish parties in Iran had previously been fragmented.



## 6. Economic Structure and Development

Rojhelat has a mixed but generally less-developed economic structure compared with central Iranian regions like Tehran or Isfahan. Its economy is shaped by agriculture, border trade, some industry, and services, but it also faces structural challenges such as unemployment and limited industrialization.

Agriculture, the backbone of the rural economy, includes crops like wheat, barley, grapes, and fruits, along with honey and dairy, supported by mountain ecosystems for livestock and beekeeping and water resources for fisheries and irrigation. Mountain ecosystems support beekeeping and livestock herding, while water resources enable fisheries and irrigation.

Rojhelat is also rich in mineral resources—including iron ore, copper, lead and zinc, and limestone—and, as part of Iran’s vast reserves estimated to reach tens of billions of tons, these resources make mining a key economic sector supporting industries such as metallurgy, construction, and chemical production. Iran possesses some of the world’s largest oil and natural gas reserves, and many of these resources are located in the Zagros Basin in Rojhelat. The provinces of Kermanshah, Ilam, and Lorestan are situated along this geological belt and host numerous hydrocarbon reservoirs. Oil and gas production in this region is mainly managed by the West Oil and Gas Production Company, a subsidiary of the Iranian Central Oil Fields Company.

Ilam province, considered the energy hub of western Iran due to its vast hydrocarbon reserves—including an estimated 17 billion barrels of oil and 14 trillion cubic meters of natural gas—produces over 230,000 barrels of oil per day and 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas annually from major fields such as Dehloran, Tang-e Bijar, Cheshmeh Khosh, Azar, and Danan. For example, the Danan oil field, discovered in 2007, currently yields thousands of barrels daily and is projected to reach about 25,000 barrels per day once fully developed.

The Tang-e Bijar gas field is a major energy resource, producing millions of cubic meters of gas per day and supplying feedstock to regional processing facilities, while Kermanshah province hosts several strategically important oil fields near the Iran-Iraq border, including Sumar, Saman,

and Naftshahr, some of which are shared with Iraq. Recent development projects aim to expand production—boosting Sumar and Saman output to around 20,000 barrels per day—with the crude oil supporting the Kermanshah refinery and contributing to domestic fuel supply and regional employment.

In addition, Lorestan province contains several oil reserves, including the Sarkan Maleh Kuh oil field in Pol-Dokhtar County, which has produced crude oil since the early 1990s, holds about 900,000 barrels of recoverable oil, and transports daily production to the Kermanshah refinery via pipelines.

Moreover, Rojhelat’s proximity to Iraq, Turkey, and Nakhjawan makes cross-border trade an important economic sector. However, limited formal employment has also led to the emergence of informal trade networks, including the work of kolbers—laborers who transport goods across mountainous borders. This phenomenon reflects broader structural issues such as unemployment and uneven development.

## 7. Science, Technology, and Medical Development

Education in Kurdish regions has expanded significantly over the past decades. University enrollment among Kurdish youth has increased. Higher education institutions in Rojhelat play an important role in regional scientific development, healthcare training, and technological innovation.

Across Rojhelat, there are roughly 450–460 universities and higher-education centers when Azad, Payame Noor, and state universities (plus other institutions) are included. The main state universities are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. List of the main state universities in Rojhelat**

Province	University	City	Main Fields
West Azerbaijan	Urmia University	Urmia	Science, Engineering, Agriculture, Humanities
West Azerbaijan	Urmia University of Medical Sciences	Urmia	Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Health Sciences
Kurdistan	University of Kurdistan	Sanandaj	Science, Engineering, Humanities
Kurdistan	Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences	Sanandaj	Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Public Health
Kermanshah	Razi University	Kermanshah	Science, Engineering, Agriculture

<b>Kermanshah</b>	Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences	Kermanshah	Medicine, Health Sciences
<b>Ilam</b>	University of Ilam	Ilam	Science, Engineering, Agriculture
<b>Ilam</b>	Ilam University of Medical Sciences	Ilam	Medicine, Nursing, Health Sciences
<b>Hamadan</b>	Bu-Ali Sina University	Hamadan	Science, Engineering, Humanities
<b>Hamadan</b>	Hamadan University of Medical Sciences	Hamadan	Medicine, Dentistry, Health Sciences
<b>Hamadan</b>	Hamadan University of Technology	Hamadan	Engineering, Applied Sciences
<b>Lorestan</b>	Lorestan University	Khorramabad	Science, Agriculture, Engineering
<b>Lorestan</b>	Lorestan University of Medical Sciences	Khorramabad	Medicine, Nursing, Health Sciences

## 8. Culture and Artistic Expression

Kurdish culture in Rojhelat, characterized by strong oral traditions, music, literature, and visual arts, is expressed through several dialects, including Sorani, Kurmanji, Southern Kurdish, and Hawrami (Gorani) with many Kurds being bilingual in Kurdish and Persian.

Kurdish culture possesses a rich heritage expressed through music, dance, theater, and traditional handicrafts, with music deeply connected to social life, spirituality, and oral tradition, serving as a medium of historical memory and cultural identity and featuring instruments such as the daf, tanbur, saz, kamancheh, duduk, and dozelleh. Dance traditions like Govand are also central to community celebrations, highlighting the vibrant cultural expressions of the Kurdish people.

Traditional arts in Kurdish regions extend beyond performance into handicrafts and material culture, including carpet and kilim weaving, pottery, and jewelry making, which serve as both artistic expression and economic livelihood for rural communities. In towns such as Marivan and Sanandaj, these crafts also play a key role in cultural tourism and heritage preservation.

The roots of Kurdish literary life in Rojhelat extend back to medieval times. Early Kurdish literary expression was strongly influenced by oral traditions and regional dialects, particularly Gorani, Hawrami, Laki, and Kalhori. In many cases, Kurdish intellectuals wrote in Persian or Arabic, as these languages dominated scholarly and administrative life in Iran.

One important feature of Kurdish literary history is the role of Gorani as a literary lingua franca across much of Iranian Kurdistan until the nineteenth century. Gorani poetry employed syllabic meters derived from pre-Islamic Iranian traditions and was widely used by court poets and religious scholars.

Modern Kurdish literature has developed significantly since the twentieth century, producing poets, scholars, and journalists who contribute to Kurdish cultural revival.

## 9. Tourism, Lifestyle, and Sports

Rojhelat is rich in historical and natural attractions, featuring sites such as the Taq-e Bostan archaeological complex, the Bisotun inscription, Lake Zarivar in Marivan, and Lake Urmia, which together reflect the region's Persian, Kurdish, and Mesopotamian heritage. Visitors can enjoy diverse tourism opportunities, including mountain trekking, eco-tourism, and cultural festivals, while sports like football, wrestling, mountaineering, and horse riding play a central role in local life. Community celebrations are vibrant, often coinciding with Nowruz, the Kurdish and Persian New Year festival.



**Figure 5.** The Taq-e Bostan archaeological complex in Kermanshah

## 10. Strategic Importance and Regional Geopolitics

Rojhelat occupies a geopolitically crucial position along Iran's western frontier, sharing borders with Iraqi Kurdistan, Turkey, and Azerbaijan's Nakhchivan region. This location has historically served as a vital corridor for both military operations and trade, linking Iran to key regional neighbors and facilitating the movement of goods, people, and ideas across borders. The region's strategic significance is further reinforced by its role in broader security dynamics, as it lies at the intersection of several ethnically and politically sensitive areas. In recent years, rising geopolitical tensions—including disputes over border security, energy transit routes, and regional alliances—have highlighted the enduring importance of western Iranian provinces. Beyond security.

considerations, Rojhelat's position also offers economic and logistical advantages, enabling it to act as a gateway for cross-border commerce and regional cooperation. Collectively, these factors underscore how geography, history, and contemporary geopolitics converge to make Rojhelat a focal point in Iran's regional strategy.

## 11. Future Prospects of Rojhelat

The future of Rojhelat will depend on a combination of political, economic, social, and cultural factors. Political reform that encourages the meaningful participation of Kurdish and other minority communities in local and national governance will be essential for building trust between the state and its multiethnic population. Economic investment, including the development of infrastructure such as transportation, healthcare, and education, will play a crucial role in improving living standards and reducing regional disparities. At the same time, increased integration into regional and cross-border trade networks could stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and strengthen ties with neighboring areas.

Cultural and linguistic recognition of Kurdish identity is another important factor, as it can foster social cohesion and preserve the unique heritage of the region. Efforts to support local language education, media, and cultural institutions can empower communities while promoting inclusion within the broader national framework.

Balancing these regional aspirations with the need for national stability remains a key challenge for Iran's multiethnic society. How the Iranian government and Kurdish communities navigate issues of representation, development, and cultural recognition will significantly shape the trajectory of Rojhelat, determining whether it becomes a region of opportunity, stability, and inclusion, or one marked by persistent tension and underdevelopment.

## 12. Conclusion

Rojhelat represents a region where geography, identity, and politics intersect in complex ways. Its mountainous terrain, strategic border position, and rich natural resources have historically shaped both the opportunities and challenges faced by Kurdish communities in Iran. As the article has shown, the region possesses considerable economic potential through agriculture, energy

resources, cross-border trade, and emerging educational and scientific institutions. At the same time, structural economic disparities, limited industrial development, and political tensions have contributed to ongoing debates over representation, regional autonomy, and cultural rights.

Historical experiences—from the Republic of Mahabad to post-revolutionary conflicts and contemporary political mobilization—continue to influence Kurdish political consciousness and relations with the Iranian state. In recent years, evolving political alliances among Kurdish organizations and the role of Kurdish regions in nationwide social movements demonstrate that Rojhelat remains an important actor within Iran's broader political landscape.

Looking forward, the long-term stability and development of the region will likely depend on policies that encourage inclusive governance, equitable economic investment, and recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity. Strengthening infrastructure, expanding educational opportunities, and integrating Rojhelat more effectively into regional economic networks could help reduce disparities and promote sustainable development. At the same time, constructive dialogue between state institutions and local communities will be essential for building trust and addressing longstanding grievances.

If these political and developmental challenges are addressed with inclusive and forward-looking policies, Rojhelat has the potential to evolve from a historically marginalized frontier into a dynamic bridge connecting Iran with the wider Middle East, fostering economic cooperation, cultural vitality, and long-term regional stability.

## References

Ahmadi, S., Hassani, H., & Abdulrahman, R. O. (2019). *Developing a fine-grained corpus for a less-resourced language: The case of Kurdish*. arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/1909.11467>

Bodette, M. (2025). *Israel–Iran war: How will Kurdish actors respond?* Kurdish Peace Institute.

Entessar, N. (2010). *Kurdish politics in the Middle East*. Lexington Books.

Gunter, M. M. (2011). *Historical dictionary of the Kurds* (2nd ed.). Scarecrow Press.

Hassanpour, A. (1992). *Nationalism and language in Kurdistan, 1918–1985*. Edwin Mellen Press.

Human Rights Watch. (2023). *Iran: Events of 2023*. Human Rights Watch.

Kreyenbroek, P. G., & Sperl, S. (Eds.). (1992). *The Kurds: A contemporary overview*. Routledge.

McDowall, D. (2004). *A modern history of the Kurds* (3rd ed.). I.B. Tauris.

Minority Rights Group International. (2023). *World directory of minorities and indigenous peoples: Kurds in Iran*.

Natali, D. (2005). *The Kurds and the state: Evolving national identity in Iraq, Turkey, and Iran*. Syracuse University Press.

Romano, D. (2006). *The Kurdish nationalist movement: Opportunity, mobilization and identity*. Cambridge University Press.

UK Home Office. (2025). *Country policy and information note: Kurds and Kurdish political groups, Iran*. Government of the United Kingdom.

Washington Kurdish Institute. (2025). *Kurdistan annual report 2025*. Washington Kurdish Institute.

Zagros Human Rights Center. (2024). *The situation of the Kurds in Iran*.

# ***We Are Not Prepared for Another Betrayal From 1975 to 2026: Why the Kurds Do Not Trust Rhetoric Alone***

By Attorney Ahmed Abdul Rahim and Dr. Akram Naasan

To the Western reader who today hears calls urging “the peoples of Iran to seize the opportunity and claim their rights,” these phrases may appear to be a natural part of political discourse in times of war.

For the Kurds, however, such words are not new. We have heard them before, and paid for them with our blood, our cities, and our mountains.

The issue is not a rejection of freedom. It is a rejection of repeated betrayal.

1975: When a Revolution Fell on the Table of Interests

In the 1970s, Mullah Mustafa Barzani led a major Kurdish revolution, supported by indications of regional and international backing. Yet in 1975, with the signing of the Algiers Agreement between Iraq and Iran, strategic calculations shifted. U.S. policy at the time, shaped in part by Henry Kissinger, prioritized balance-of-power considerations over sustained support.

Within days, the revolution collapsed. It was not defeated on the battlefield but in international negotiations.

That was the first major lesson: undocumented support can evaporate in an instant.



Dr. Akram Naasan



Attorney Ahmed Abdul Rahim



The 1975 image that symbolized this turning point brought together Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran, Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and Houari Boumédiène of Algeria, under the supervision of Henry Kissinger.

#### 1991: A Call Without Commitment

During the Gulf War, U.S. President George H. W. Bush called upon the Iraqi people to rise against the dictator.



The Kurdish camps on the Turkish–Iranian border in 1991

The Kurds and the Shiites responded. But there was no direct commitment to protect them when the machinery of repression began.



The result was a humanitarian catastrophe. Millions of Kurds fled toward the Turkish and Iranian borders. The mountains became collective shelters.



The international community later intervened by imposing a no-fly zone, but only after betrayal had already occurred.



The difference between rhetoric and guarantee was the difference between life and displacement.



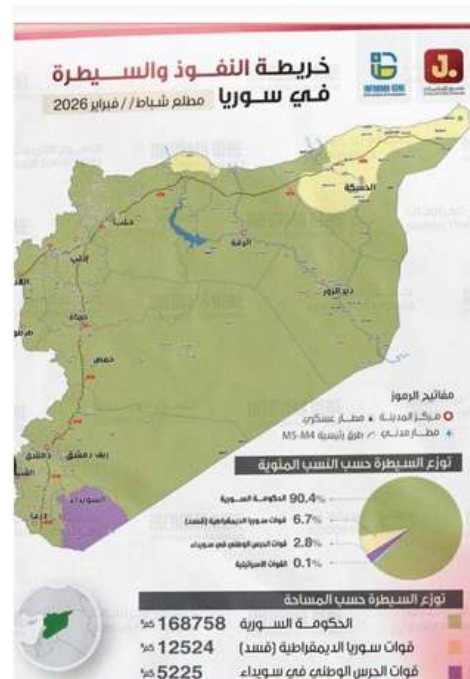
2017: The Will of a People, and International Isolation

In 2017, 93.7 percent of the people of the Kurdistan Region voted in favor of independence. It was a clear democratic exercise.



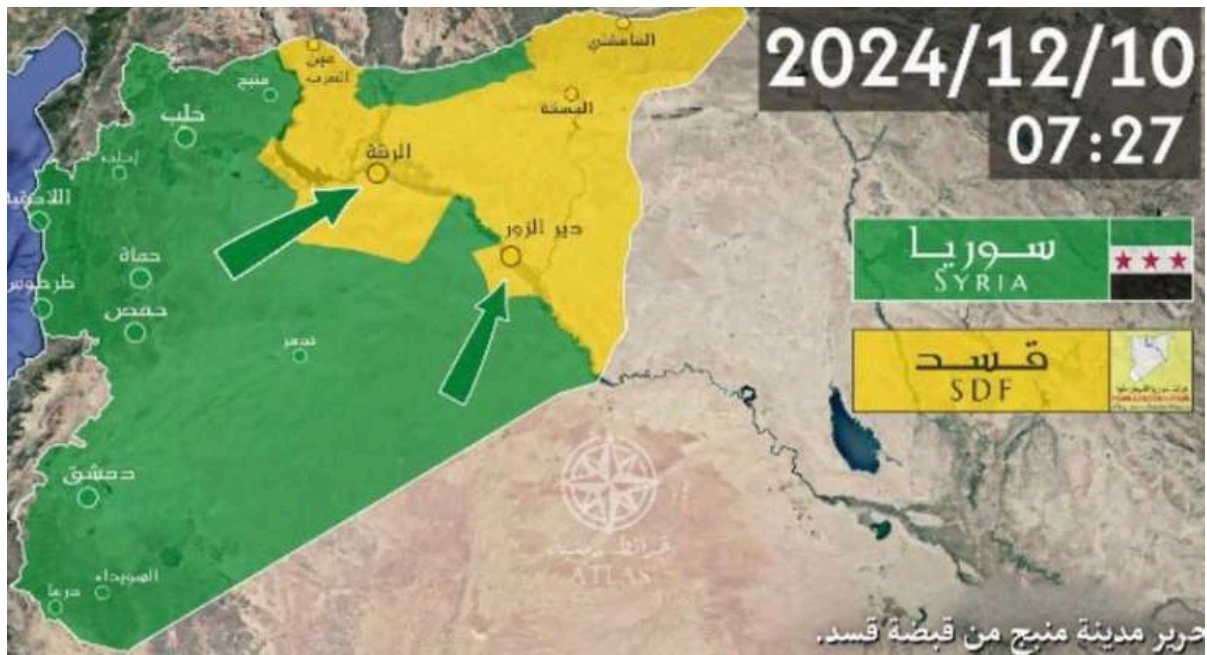
Yet Turkey and Iran closed their borders, and Baghdad moved militarily toward Kirkuk, including with American-made Abrams tanks. There was no international protection for the outcome of the referendum.

Once again, the error was not in demanding a right, but in assuming that international silence meant neutrality.



## Rojava: Partnership in War, Shifts in Politics

In Rojava, more than 100,000 Kurdish men and women fought within the international coalition against terrorism. Over 30,000 Kurdish fighters were martyred in battles against ISIS.



Yet in 2025–2026, with political shifts on the ground, U.S. positions changed, and control maps were altered.

This was not a theoretical experience. It was one written in blood and sacrifice. And when interests shift, the local fighter pays first.

### 2026: New Rhetoric, Old Memory

Today, amid war between Israel and the United States on one side and Iran on the other, calls are once again directed at the peoples of Iran to “seize the opportunity.” U.S. President Donald Trump urges the exploitation of a historic moment.

But the Kurds do not hear words alone.

They hear the echo of 1991.

They see the shadow of 1975.

They remember 2017 and Rojava.

The question is not whether peoples have the right to freedom. That right is constant.

The aircraft that bomb are not our air force. The war unfolding is not our national project.

We do not need phone promises. Nor do we need passing tactical positions.

We need a clear strategic alliance, a commitment written before action, not sympathy expressed after catastrophe.

Qasimlo's Question, Still Relevant

When Professor Abdul Rahman Qasimlo was asked to take major steps within the context of the Iran, Iraq War, his response was fundamental:

What is the guarantee?

Will you fight with me for Kurdistan?

The question was not weakness. It reflected a deep understanding that states are not built on emotional moments, but on a network of legal and political protection.

Betrayal Is Not Destiny. It Is a Miscalculation

1975 was a political betrayal.

1991 was a military and humanitarian betrayal.

2017 was a diplomatic betrayal.

Rojava was the betrayal of an incomplete partnership.

In 2026, the Kurds cannot accept another betrayal.



A Kurdish child in the camps after displacement.



Those who seek genuine partnership with the Kurds must speak the language of long-term strategic alliance not the language of a passing “opportunity.”

We do not reject freedom.

We do not fear change.

But we have learned that rhetoric alone does not protect a people, and that in politics, memory is more important than enthusiasm.

The mountains are still there.

But we do not wish to return to them.

We seek a partnership founded upon explicit commitment, so that the dream of freedom does not once again become betrayal.



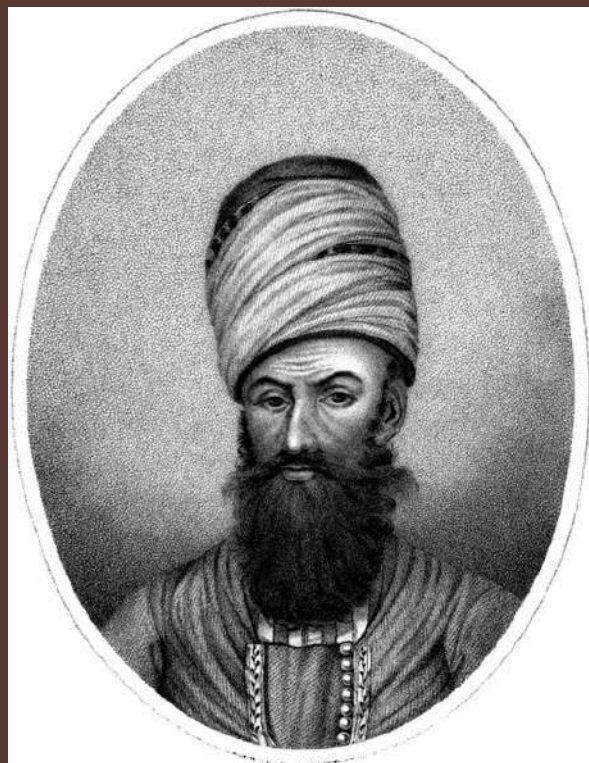
# ***Karim Khan Zand: A Pragmatic Reformer Amid Ruin and Reconstruction***

**by :Abbas Mansouran 10 May 2026**

In the history of Middle Eastern rulers, particularly within the deeply oppressive feudal and tribal structure of Iran, few figures can be found who equal Karim Khan Zand in terms of constructive governance and benevolence. To understand his historical position and role (1705–1779), it is necessary to examine the political and economic conditions of Iran during his time.

The land of Iran in that era had been devastated by the consequences of invasions and occupations carried out by bloodthirsty Afghan rulers, the destruction that had already occurred during the Safavid period, the backwardness resulting from religious rule, internal tribal conflicts, and external invasions. It was further ravaged by the horrific dynastic wars among the surviving relatives of Nader Shah and by the tribal struggles and destruction wrought by the Qajar tribes, each of which sought political power. These conflicts engulfed every corner of Iran in fire, war, bloodshed, and ruin.

Under such circumstances, a different tendency emerged from among one of Nader Shah's commanders and military forces—a tendency represented by Karim Khan Zand, who came from an ancient and indigenous Zagros family. Karim Khan should not be regarded merely as a tribal ruler. Rather, he should be understood as the product of the social, political, and leadership crises of a fragmented land whose roots extended back to the social transformations and collapse of the late Sasanian period and Iran's subsequent entry into recurring cycles of invasion, despotism, and civil war.



Karim Khan Zand was neither the initiator of capitalist modernity nor the bearer of a revolutionary project. Instead, he was a pragmatist. Through his upbringing and experiences during the Afsharid era, he developed a progressive approach toward society and realized that for society and political authority to endure—not merely to preserve power at any cost—they required security, centralization, stability, social balance, and the reconstruction of infrastructure.

On the other hand, Karim Khan Zand should be viewed as a figure emerging from the heart of Zagros tribal society and as a product of centuries of resistance, isolation, and survival. This was a society that, from the collapse of the Sasanian Empire in the seventh century CE until the Afsharid era, lived on the margins of invading and despotic powers and was never fully absorbed into the order of the caliphates, Turkic monarchies, or military empires.

The Zand tribe, belonging to the Lur/Lak branches, formed part of this mountainous geography—a geography based on pastoralism, kinship ties, warfare, and a degree of tribal autonomy that resisted the concentration of state power. Unlike court aristocrats or Qizilbash elites, the Zands maintained a direct connection to production, migration, land cultivation, and everyday life in the Zagros region. They were not an urban ruling aristocracy; rather, they belonged to the productive and warrior strata of society whose lives were inseparably linked to insecurity, forced migration, drought, and the struggle for survival against oppression and plunder.



This environment shaped Karim Khan's character. He grew up amid relative poverty, the hardships of productive labor, the realities of nature, and direct experiences of historical violence.

The forced relocation of the Zand tribe to Khorasan during the reign of Nader Shah and Karim Khan's service in the army of Nader Afshar played a decisive role in shaping his mentality. He witnessed both the power of a centralized state and the devastating consequences of permanent warfare and heavy taxation on the lives of the subjects and provinces. He also differed in upbringing and outlook from many of the other belligerent and destructive tribes of his time. This experience gave rise to a form of political and social realism that was rarely found among his contemporaries. Therefore, when he emerged amid the chaos that followed Nader Shah's death, he was more concerned with restoring stability than with pursuing imperial ambitions and territorial expansion.

The title "Vakil al-Ra'aya" (Representative of the People) was more than an ethical gesture or a symbol of humility. It reflected a practical understanding of the crisis of legitimacy in post-Safavid Iran. Karim Khan deliberately placed a Safavid heir, Shah Ismail III, on the throne because the Safavid era remained deeply embedded in the historical memory—and not necessarily the historical consciousness—of Iranian society. In contrast to the wolf-like and confrontational rulers of the periods of Nader Shah and the Qajar rivals, he consciously chose this symbolic figure. He first called himself the Representative of the Shah and later the Representative of the People, adopting an approach directed toward society rather than dynastic glorification.

He understood that a society exhausted by war, collapse, and taxation required security, order, relief from pressure, and the reconstruction of economic and social infrastructure far more than it required royal grandeur. If Nader Shah may be called the son of "the sword and the saddle," then Karim Khan may rightly be called the son of "the Zagros and the soil."

Following the Muslim conquest of Iran in 651 CE, Iran—unlike Europe—did not undergo a gradual transition from feudalism to modern capitalism in the classical sense. Its arid geography, the dependence of agriculture on irrigation networks and qanats, and the concentration of ownership over water and land in the hands of the state produced a structure that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels described as the "Asiatic Mode of Production" or Eastern Despotism.

Within this system, the state was not merely a political authority; it was also the principal owner of vital resources and the organizer of production. Whenever the central government weakened, centrifugal forces—provincial rulers, tribal chiefs, local dynasts, and military commanders—re-emerged, plunging society into recurring cycles of war and fragmentation.

Apart from the independence movements of the early Islamic centuries led by figures such as Babak Khorramdin and Mazyar, Iran remained under the domination of invading caliphates and Turkic dynasties such as the Ghaznavids, Seljuks, Mongols, and Timurids. Political power was largely based on military coercion, tribute extraction, land grants, religious endowments, and oppressive taxation.

Although the Mongol and Timurid rulers were eventually absorbed into Iranian culture, they did not fundamentally alter the logic of governance. Every time society gained an opportunity for reconstruction, a new wave of invasion or civil war disrupted the process and returned the country to instability.

The Safavids, who emerged from Turkic tribal origins, founded the first centralized Iranian state in 1501 CE after centuries of fragmentation. By inviting Shi'a clerics from Lebanon, Iraq, and the Levant, they established a lasting alliance between monarchy and religion against society. During the reign of Shah Abbas I, Iran achieved a degree of stability; however, the economy remained fundamentally feudal and tributary in nature.

From the late seventeenth century onward, signs of decline became increasingly evident. The reign of Shah Sultan Husayn symbolized this deterioration—a government trapped by superstition and administrative paralysis. The fall of Isfahan to Afghan invaders in 1722 CE, who left behind little but bloodshed and ashes, marked not merely the end of a dynasty but the complete collapse of a political order, a society, and a social structure that had defined Iranian identity for two centuries.

In these circumstances, society, already immersed in profound crisis, witnessed the rise of Nader Afshar. Nader belonged to the Qereqlu branch of the Afshar tribe, which had settled in the Abivard region of northern Khorasan as a result of Safavid policies. Emerging from poverty and captivity, Nader succeeded in reunifying Iran through his extraordinary military genius. Yet his rule was built upon a war economy and systematic plunder.

Through endless military campaigns and the imposition of crushing taxes to finance his conquests, he suffocated agricultural production and pushed society into such desperation that famine-driven rebellions spread throughout Iran. His invasion of India in 1739 CE brought immense wealth, but it transformed the vast territories of Iran into a population of producers whose labor was dedicated primarily to sustaining a world-conquering army.

It was precisely this profound contradiction that later led Karim Khan to choose a fundamentally different path: a return to productive security and a reduction of fiscal pressure.

Karim Khan understood that Iran was not yet prepared for a complete break with Safavid legitimacy. Therefore, he presented himself as the Representative of a Safavid successor in order to rebuild central authority. Soon afterward, however, he distanced himself from this symbolic framework and adopted the title “Vakil al-Ra‘aya” (Representative of the People).

He reduced heavy taxation and revitalized the cycle of local production. Karim Khan believed that:

**“A prosperous peasantry creates a prosperous state.”**

He made Shiraz his capital and constructed the Vakil Bazaar, Vakil Mosque, and Vakil Bathhouse, creating urban and economic infrastructure that stimulated employment and the circulation of wealth. In foreign policy as well, unlike Nader Shah, he prioritized commercial security over territorial expansion and imperial conquest.

Despite Karim Khan's distinctive personality and governing approach, the Zand state ultimately remained confined within the broader framework of the Asiatic Mode of Production. The authority of the government rested primarily upon his personal leadership rather than upon durable political institutions. No independent bourgeoisie emerged, nor did a modern nation-state come into existence. For this reason, Karim Khan may be regarded as the last relatively moderate ruler of Iran's traditional order—one who sought to reduce the intensity of violence and reconstruct a devastated society without fundamentally transforming its underlying structures.

Following Karim Khan's death in 1779 CE and the bloody collapse of the Zand dynasty, Iran once again descended into tribal warfare. From within the same traditional political structure, the Qajar tribal leaders rose to power and ushered in a new era of destruction and conflict.

## **The Tragic End of the Zand Dynasty and the Betrayal of the Kalantar**

One of the most decisive figures in the downfall of the Zand dynasty was Haj Ebrahim Khan Kalantar, the ancestor of the prominent Qavam family of Shiraz. At a critical moment, through an internal urban coup, he closed the gates of Shiraz to Lotf Ali Khan Zand and effectively shattered the foundations of Zand resistance. By delivering the keys of the city and its treasury to Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar, he became one of the principal architects of the transfer of power to the new dynasty.

As a result of Haj Ebrahim's betrayal, Lotf Ali Khan was eventually captured after his legendary resistance in Kerman. Agha Mohammad Khan ordered that his eyes be gouged out, and after severe torture, he was executed.

The tragedy did not end with the king himself. All male descendants of the Zand family were castrated in order to extinguish the dynasty's bloodline, while the women of the family were taken into captivity. Agha Mohammad Khan even ordered the remains of Karim Khan Zand to be buried beneath the stairs of the Golestan Palace, so that he could symbolically trample upon them every day.

Haj Ebrahim, who had helped deliver the throne to the Qajars, ultimately became a victim of the very power he had created. Fath-Ali Shah Qajar, successor to Agha Mohammad Khan, grew fearful of Haj Ebrahim's immense influence and ordered the complete destruction of his family.

Haj Ebrahim's tongue was cut out, he was blinded, and he was eventually thrown into a cauldron of boiling water. At the same time, most of his sons and brothers throughout Iran were arrested, executed, blinded, or mutilated. Their fate demonstrated a central principle of despotism and absolute rule:

A traitor to his benefactor will never be trusted by the new power he helps bring to power.



# THE IDENTITY OF THE PROVINCE OF URMIA: CENTER AND BASE OF POLITICAL UPRISINGS

The city of Urmia is an important center of political uprisings in Eastern Kurdistan. To its north lie Mount Ararat, Yerevan, and Nakhchivan. To the west is Northern Kurdistan, while to the east lies Lake Urmia. To the south are Mahabad and Southern Kurdistan.

## About Kakşar Oremar

*Kakşar Oremar is a Kurdish writer, researcher, and documentary filmmaker known for his work on Kurdish history, biography, and cultural memory. Through his writings and documentaries, he has focused on documenting the lives of influential Kurdish figures and preserving Kurdish historical narratives.*

*He writes in Kurdish, Turkish, Persian, and German, reflecting his broad intellectual and cultural engagement.*

*His work often explores themes of identity, history, political movements, and the collective memory of the Kurdish people.*

*Kakşar Oremar is regarded as one of the voices contributing to the documentation of Kurdish historical and cultural heritage through literature and visual storytelling.*



The province of Urmia includes the cities of Mahabad, Khoy, Salmas, Maku, Çaldıran, Miyandoab, Bokan, Naghadeh, Shino, Piranshahr, and Sardasht. Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Assyrians, and Armenians live in the region. The province has a population of about 2,496,320 people and an area of 27,059 km<sup>2</sup>. The city of Urmia itself has around 725,000 inhabitants and covers 5,298 km<sup>2</sup>.

The districts connected to Urmia include Dol, Geliyê Qasimlo, Deştêbêl, Mirgewer, Tirgewer, Soma, Biradost, Şipîran, Enzel, and Nazlo. Kurdish tribes in the region include Begzade, Celalî, Dirî, Hinare, Herkî, Kirmanc, Kore Sunnî, Seyîd, and Şikak. Throughout the region's history, many uprisings took place, such as the Dimdim Castle resistance, the revolt of Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri, the movement of Simko Şikak, JK, HDK, and the Republic of Kurdistan against the Iranian state.



## • Urmia – City of Zoroaster and Political Uprisings

For thousands of years, the city known as “Çiçist,” “City of Water,” “Urmia,” or “Wirmê” on the shores of its lake has been a place of life and coexistence. Today, Kurds, Assyrians, and Azerbaijanis continue to live there together in mutual respect.

For thousands of years, the city known as “Çiçist,” “City of Water,” “Urmia,” or “Wirmê” on the shores of its lake has been a place of life and coexistence. Today, Kurds, Assyrians, and Azerbaijanis continue to live there together in mutual respect.

The history of the city and its Kurdish identity have often been written about. Iranian and Azerbaijani historians themselves acknowledge uprisings such as the Dimdim Castle resistance, the revolt of Sheikh Ubeydullah Nehri, the uprising of Simko Şikak, the Celalî tribe, and the Republic of Kurdistan.

Historical accounts indicate that Emir Khan Lepzêrîn fought against the Afshar nomads who displaced thousands of Kurdish families to Khorasan and Qazvin. Likewise, Sheikh Ubeydullah and Simko Şikak resisted demographic changes in their ancestral homeland.

## • Eastern Kurdistan

Eastern Kurdistan consists of the provinces of Urmia, Sanandaj (Sine), Kermanshah, Ilam, and the Kurdish-inhabited parts of Lorestan. After Northern Kurdistan, Eastern Kurdistan forms the largest part of Kurdistan geographically. However, according to Iran’s administrative system, only Sanandaj and a few surrounding cities are officially referred to as “Iranian Kurdistan.” The total area of Eastern Kurdistan exceeds 175,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

## • The Name Urmia

On the map of Greater Kurdistan, Urmia lies in the northeastern part of Kurdistan and northwestern Iran. It is considered one of the region’s oldest cities.

Several interpretations of the name exist:

- In Aramaic, “Ur” means city and “Miyah” means water → “City of Water.”
- Others derive it from Chaldean, interpreting it as “near the sea.”
- Ancient sources also mention “Çiçest,” an Avestan word meaning “white” or “clear.”

## • Historical Sites in Urmia

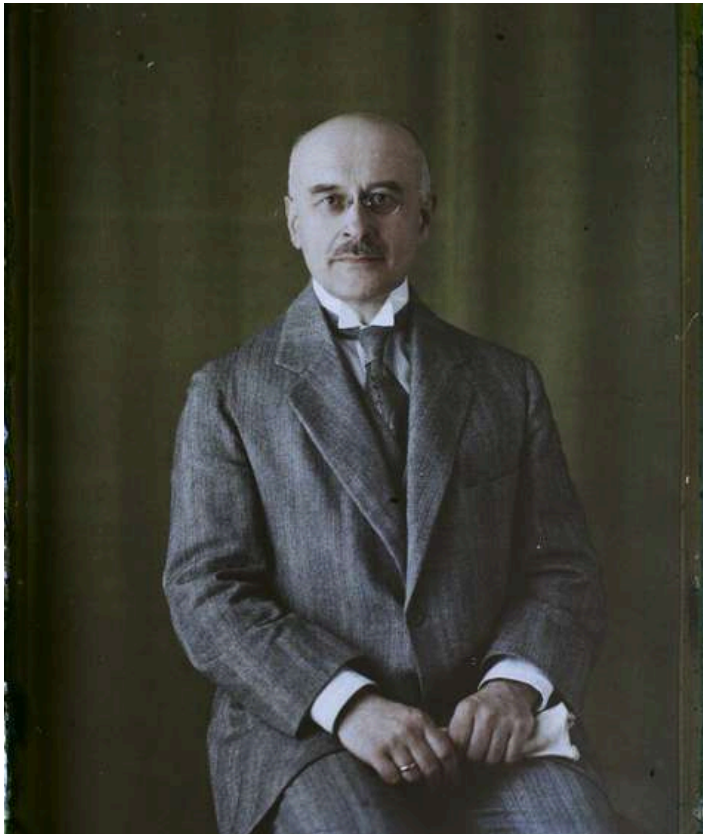
Important historical sites include:

1. Hasanlu Hill near Naghadeh
2. The fortress of Simko Şikak
3. The Grand Mosque of Urmia
4. Takht-e Soleiman
5. Se Gonbad
6. Dimdim Castle
7. The Four-Tower Mansion
8. Saint Mary Church
9. Serdar Mosque
10. Yekder Castle
11. Simayil Khan Castle
12. The Fire Temple of Temer
13. The Urmia Museum
14. Zêwe Castle
15. Xantextî

These sites are presented as important signs of Kurdish civilization and culture in the region

## • Urmia and Kurdish Uprisings

The province of Urmia played a strategic role in the political history of Kurdistan. Historians particularly mention the uprising of Emir Khan Lepzêrîn / Dimdim (1609-1610), the revolt of Sheikh Ubeydullah, the uprising of Simko Şikak, and the movement of the Celalî tribe.



### • Lake Urmia

Special attention is given to Simko Şikak, described as the “father of Kurdish nationalism” in Eastern Kurdistan. During his uprising, Urmia reportedly functioned for several years as the capital of a Kurdish administration, where schools, cultural associations, and the first Kurdish newspaper in Eastern Kurdistan were established.

Lake Urmia forms part of the boundary between Kurdistan and Iranian Azerbaijan. The lake is approximately 135 km long, 15–50 km wide, and situated 1,267 meters above sea level.

Today, more than 98% of the lake has dried up. The main causes are dam construction, deep well drilling, and the Urmia–Tabriz roadway.

### • Urmia Today

Today, Urmia remains a multiethnic city where Kurds, Assyrians, and Azerbaijanis live together. Despite the large Kurdish population, Kurds continue to face political and economic marginalization.

The region is known for grapes, apples, apricots, pears, and agricultural production, including wine-making.

The text concludes by arguing that oppression against Kurds in Urmia continues today and that the city remains an important center of Kurdish political and cultural movements.

# ***The Civilizational Continuity Between the Elamites and the Lurs (Kurds): A Study in Political Geography and Ancient Roots***

**Prepared by: Marwan Flo**

## **Introduction**

The region southwest of the Zagros Mountains is considered one of the oldest centers of civilization in the world, where the dawn of the Elamite civilization witnessed the establishment of the earliest foundations of urban life. Researchers in historical anthropology argue that the tribes known as the “Lurs” represent the geographic and biological extension of this civilization, forming a human bridge linking the Sumerian–Elamite eras with the political formations of the Islamic and modern periods.<sup>1</sup>

## **First: The Elamites (Kurds) in the Sumerian Era (Roots of Sovereignty)**

Elam was not merely a neighboring land to Sumer; it was a powerful political and military entity.

The Elamite mountain dynasties (associated with the region of present-day Luristan) are believed to have existed since the third millennium BCE.

## **The Awan Dynasty (Awan)**

Ruled around 2500 BCE and controlled large parts of Mesopotamia. The Sumerian King List mentions its rulers as “a dominant power.”<sup>2</sup>

# Conflict with Ur

In 2004 BCE, the Elamites (Kurds) succeeded in overthrowing the Third Dynasty of Ur and captured the Sumerian king Ibbi-Sin, taking him prisoner to the city of Susa, thereby ending Sumerian dominance in the region.<sup>3</sup>

## Visual Appendix 1: Clay Tablet in Elamite Cuneiform Script

(Insert image of an Elamite clay tablet from Susa)



### Significance:

This artifact documents the Elamite language as an independent linguistic system that does not belong to the Semitic language families, thereby confirming the ethno-linguistic distinctiveness of the region's inhabitants before any later migrations.

# Second: The Lurs (Kurds) – Elamite Continuity

The region of Luristan-e Sughra (Lesser Luristan) represents the historical homeland of the Feyli Lurs and corresponds to the highland territories of the ancient Elamite Empire.

## 1. Geographical Continuity

The Elamites relied on the mountains as natural fortifications and a source of human resources. The same geographic environment was preserved by the Feyli Lurs throughout the centuries.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. The Atabegate of Lesser Luristan (The Khorshidi Dynasty)

This principality was founded in 1155 CE by Shuja al-Din Khorshid. The kingdom continued to rule vast territories including Khorramabad, Ilam, Badrāh, and Mandali for more than 440 years. It was during this period that the Feyli identity emerged as an independent political entity.<sup>5</sup>

## Visual Appendix 2: Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress in Khorramabad

(Insert image of the historic fortress)



# Significance

A prominent architectural monument built upon Elamite and Sassanian foundations. It served as the seat of government for the Feyli rulers of the Khorshidi dynasty and symbolizes enduring political sovereignty.

## Third: Demographic Change and the Term “Arabistan”

From an academic historical perspective, Arab migrations into these regions are considered a phenomenon that occurred after the Islamic conquest and intensified during later centuries.

## Nature of Arab Presence

Arab tribes entered the lowland plains as incoming groups seeking fertile environments, while the indigenous populations—the Lurs and Elamites—remained concentrated in the mountainous highlands.<sup>6</sup>

## Emergence of the Term “Arabistan”

The region was not known by this name in antiquity. The term “Arabistan” officially appeared during the Safavid period (16th century CE) as an administrative designation used to distinguish the province inhabited by Arab tribes from the province of Luristan.<sup>7</sup>

## Visual Appendix 3: The Bronze Statue Discovered in Susa

(Insert image of the original statue)



## Significance:

Its discovery in Susa, rather than Babylon, is presented as evidence of the strength of the Elamite mountain civilization that conquered Babylon and transferred symbols of sovereignty to the capital of the Elamites/Lurs.

## Fourth: The Feyli Lur Rulers and the Fall of Their Sovereignty

The Feyli Emirate reached the height of its power in administration and governance. Among its most prominent rulers were:

- Shuja al-Din Khorshid: Founder of the dynasty and the unifier of the tribes.
- Shah Verdi Khan: The last ruler of the Khorshidi dynasty, who was killed in 1597 CE by order of Shah Abbas I, leading to the end of the Feylis' complete independence and their incorporation into the provincial (Welayat) administrative system.<sup>8</sup>

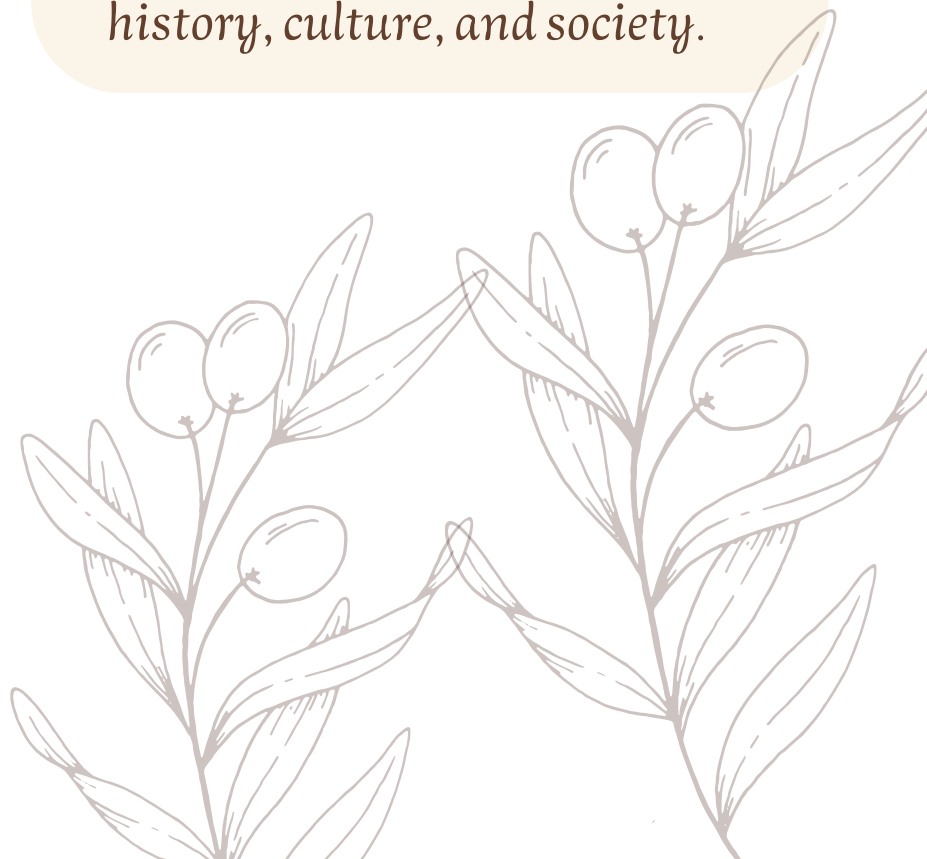
# *Development of the Kurdish Language and Identity*

## *Kurdish Identity in Germany*

### **1. Introduction**

“The world’s largest stateless ethnic group is at home in one of the most unstable regions on Earth – Kurdistan.” (National Geographic, accessed 31.10.24). In 1639, the Ottoman Empire and the Persian Empire divided Kurdistan between themselves, and in 1923 Kurdistan was divided into four sections between Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. The population of Kurdistan became dispersed and separated. In the Turkish section, called “Bakur” in Kurdish, approximately 25 million Kurds live. In the Iranian part, known in Kurdish as “Rojhalat,” around 8 million Kurds are settled. In the Iraqi part, called “Basur” in Kurdish, about 6 million people of Kurdish descent live. In the Syrian section, known in Kurdish as “Rojava,” an estimated 3 million Kurds reside. The remaining Kurds live in various countries and across different continents.

Evin-Xace Naasan is a Kurdish student based in Germany with a strong interest in geography, history, language, and cultural studies. Her academic work focuses on Kurdish identity, the development of the Kurdish language, and the experiences of Kurdish communities in Europe. Through her research, she aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of Kurdish history, culture, and society.



For 60 million Kurds, however, this means more than just a desire for independence. Kurdish settlement areas are located primarily in eastern Turkey and in the border regions of Iraq, Iran, and Syria – their settlement areas are among the most unstable regions globally. The Kurds form the largest ethnic community in the world without their own state. Why are all these Kurds stateless? Kurds constitute the largest ethnic minority in Turkey, yet they have been oppressed by the Turkish state for a long time. Until recently, even the use of the Kurdish language was prohibited.

Kurds in Iraq also suffered for decades from conflict and bloodshed. During the First Gulf War in the 1980s, Iraq used chemical weapons against Kurdish civilians and violently suppressed a rebellion. Tens of thousands of Kurds died, and hundreds of thousands fled. During the Second Gulf War from 1990 to 1991, 1.5 million Kurds fled to Turkey. Turkey subsequently closed its borders, leaving Kurdish refugees stranded in the border region until coalition forces created a safe haven for them. After the UN guaranteed the protection of the Kurds, Iraq allowed the Kurdistan Regional Government to govern part of the country as the Autonomous Kurdistan Region.



This struggle has since spread to Syria, where the Kurds also form the largest minority and have long suffered under state oppression. During the Syrian Civil War, the Kurds controlled large areas in northern Syria and often allied themselves with the U.S. military in the fight against the Islamic State. In October 2019, U.S. troops withdrew from the Syrian–Turkish border, after which Turkish armed forces entered the Kurdish-controlled areas of Syria.

The relationship between the Iranian government and the Kurds has been shaped by failed hopes and disputes. At first, the Islamic Republic was supported by many Kurds, who hoped it would bring cultural and political freedoms. This dream was soon destroyed – the pursuit of autonomy led to oppression and state repression during the 1980s.

“As long as Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria refuse collective and individual equality for the Kurds living within their territories, the Kurds will continue to fight for the creation of their own state.” (Federal Agency for Civic Education, accessed 31.10.24).

## 2. Historical Development of the Kurdish Language

### 2.1 Origin and Development of the Kurdish Language

The language of the Kurds is part of the northwestern group of the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family and shares many similarities in both grammar and vocabulary with ancient languages such as Sanskrit and Avestan, as well as with modern languages such as French, English, and German. Kurdish is especially closely related to Dari and Persian, which, like Kurdish, also belong to the Iranian language family.

The Kurdish language is characterized as an inflected and melodic language. The language of the Kurds was, for the most part, passed down orally. This was especially done through the *Dengbêj*, who are traditional Kurdish singers.

The Kurds use three different writing systems for their alphabet – Arabic, Cyrillic, and Latin scripts. However, the Latin script is the most widely used among Kurds. The Latin alphabet became widespread in Kurdish-speaking regions in 1932 through a Kurdish magazine titled *Hawar*. In Kurdish, the word *Hawar* means “cry for help.”

### 2.2 Dialects and Differences Within the Kurdish Languages



The Kurdish language is divided into two main dialect groups – Northern Kurmanji and Central Kurmanji – as well as two secondary dialect groups – Southern Kurmanji and the Gorani-Zazaki group. In almost all parts of Kurdistan, Kurdish is permitted at most as an everyday language. Kurdish is not related in any way to Arabic or Turkish.

Kurmanji is the most widely spoken dialect of the Kurdish languages. More than half of all Kurds speak the Kurmanji dialect. Kurmanji is spoken by approximately 90% of the Kurds in Turkish, Iranian, and Iraqi Kurdistan. The Zazaki dialect is another dialect spoken in certain regions of Turkish Kurdistan. Gorani and the other dialects continue to be spoken in the three southernmost parts of Kurdistan.

English	Kurdisch kurmanci	Kurdisch Sorani
Country	Welat	ولآت
Family	Malbat	خێزان
Boy	xort	کور
School	dibistan	قوتابخانه
Bread	nan	نان
Car	trimbel	تۆتۆمییل

Kurdish is recognized as an official language in the autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In Iran and Armenia, Kurdish is recognized as a minority language.

## 2.3 Influence of External Powers and Cultures on the Language

The language of the Kurds was banned or suppressed for a long time in the countries where the majority of Kurds live. The Kurdish language was restricted and oppressed in Syria, Iraq, and Iran, and for a long time it was even prohibited in Turkey. In Turkey, Kurdish was banned because the state sought to establish a single national identity and language within the country. In Syria, the Kurdish language was heavily suppressed in public life.

Attempts by the governments of Iran and Iraq to weaken the Kurds also strongly affected the Kurdish language, causing its development to decline significantly. External cultures greatly influenced the Kurdish language, just as Kurdish also influenced other cultures. Through religion, Arabic and Persian words were incorporated into Kurdish. During the Ottoman Empire – which was jointly ruled by Turks and Kurds – Kurdish words were adopted into the Turkish language, and vice versa.

# 3. Formation of Kurdish Identity

## 3.1 Historical and Cultural Roots of Kurdish Identity

The Kurds are one of the oldest cultural peoples on Earth. The people of Kurdistan have been mentioned in Sumerian texts for more than four thousand years. In ancient times, the Kurds of today lived under different names. The question of how the current name “Kurds” originated is still debated by many scholars and experts today. The cultural roots of Kurdish identity were shaped by a diverse range of religions. Other important aspects of Kurdish culture include valuable literary and musical traditions, which have always been preserved despite many hardships.

## 3.2 The Role of Language in the Formation of Identity

Because language has been used as a means of passing down cultural traditions, history, and values, it is an important component of identity formation. Kurdish literature, songs, music, and dances strengthen the Kurdish community immensely. Despite the political suppression of the Kurdish language, it remains a powerful symbol and instrument of Kurdish identity and resistance against oppression.

## 3.3 Influence of Political and Social Movements on Kurdish Identity

Kurdish identity has been strongly shaped by political movements, as they promote awareness of Kurdish language and culture. This identity is often used as a form of resistance—Berxwedan in Kurdish – against oppression by other states, for example by the PKK. Social movements strongly motivate, encourage, and empower the Kurdish people. The exchange of languages and cultures, as well as the support of rights and the creation of communities, all contribute to strengthening Kurdish identity. NGOs and various activist groups work to preserve Kurdish identity despite years of oppression.



# 4. Kurdish Identity in Germany

## 4.1 Migration and Integration of Kurds in Germany

According to rough estimates, around 1.3 million Kurds live in Germany, making them one of the largest immigrant communities in the country. A brief look at the history and development of Kurdish migration to Germany shows that, although there were economic reasons, the primary causes were political and humanitarian, especially due to attacks by the Turkish state on the people of Kurdistan.

Kurds mainly live in large cities in the western federal states of Germany, with North Rhine-Westphalia being particularly popular among Kurdish communities. During the labor migration of the 1960s and 1970s, many Kurds from the rural province of North Kurdistan (the Turkish part) came to Germany because of the economic crisis in Turkey, which heavily affected the Kurdish population, especially in the agricultural sector.

In 1980, a military coup took place in Turkey, followed by civil war in the 1990s. As a result, many Kurds fled war, political persecution, repression, discrimination, and exclusion. During this period, Kurdish refugees from the Kurdish regions of Iraq, Iran, and Syria also came to Germany for the same reasons and due to the same cause: Turkey.

Because Kurdish identity, as in Turkey, is not officially recognized by the Federal Republic of Germany, there are relatively few studies and research projects about Kurds. Kurds in Germany often choose to live near relatives or Kurdish communities. A large proportion work in physically demanding professions, mainly in trade and the service sector. They work in many business fields, often in family-run enterprises such as travel agencies, restaurants, grocery stores, beauty salons, and hair salons. However, many Kurds are also well educated and work in academic professions. In addition, there are Kurdish artists and politicians represented at different levels of government.

## 4.2 Preservation and Change of Kurdish Identity in Exile

Newroz is the most important holiday in the Kurdish community. Newroz – the Kurdish New Year festival – represents a large part of Kurdish identity and culture. Today, Newroz is recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its origins lie in Rojhalat (the Iranian part of Kurdistan). Newroz always falls on March 21, the beginning of spring, a date recognized by the United Nations as the International Day of Nowruz.

Legends, customs, and traditions differ across all four parts of Kurdistan, just as the spellings of the festival vary. Public Newroz celebrations for Kurdish communities are especially common in the old federal states of Germany. The legend behind the origin of Newroz centers on uprising and liberation from tyranny. Because of this symbolism, the festival was also adopted by political movements. Today, it is celebrated as a festival, but always in connection with the idea of resistance against oppression through uprising.

Kurds continue to face racism and assimilation policies both in other countries and in Germany. Therefore, Newroz is still shaped by the ideas of resistance and hope. The Kurdish festival itself was banned in Turkey. When such a celebration is prohibited, celebrating it becomes a form of resistance. After attempts to ban the festival in Turkey failed, efforts were made to claim that the festival had Turkish origins.

During the celebrations, people wear traditional Kurdish festive clothing, and some visit the graves of deceased relatives. In general, the festival is closely associated with public gatherings where people dance, light fires, and celebrate together. The preservation of this festival is supported by various associations. Private celebrations are also organized both in Germany and in other countries where Kurds live in exile rather than in their homeland.

The preservation of Kurdish identity also largely occurs through the continuation of language, culture, and traditions in Germany. Kurdish communities across the country organize events, teach the Kurdish language, and frequently use modern social media to raise awareness and strengthen connections. Music and political activities, such as demonstrations, help keep the heritage alive. These associations strengthen Kurdish identity and help young Kurdish men and women develop self-confidence.

“Konstantin – Andok, we will never forget you and will continue your struggle. The fallen are immortal – Şehîd namirin! Every one of our tears is a sign of our anger and water for the flower of solidarity.”

This was written by the Kiel Kurdistan Solidarity group in their invitation to the memorial ceremony for the 24-year-old. Şehîd Andok fought alongside other freedom fighters who, like him, had traveled to Rojava to support the Kurds. Fighters for the freedom of Kurdistan came from the United States, England, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Canada, and Rojava to fight against attacks by the IslamicState and the Turkish army for the freedom of the Kurdishpeople.

Konstantin – Şehîd Andok – is described as a politicallyengaged young man whose goal was to protect the people ofRojava from violence and atrocities. For this reason, he joinedthe YPG in 2016. Despite suffering multiple injuries, Konstantin returned to Kurdistan in March 2019 with thewords: “Daesh has not yet been defeated.” In October 2019, he was killed in a Turkish airstrike.

## 6. Survey on Kurdish Identity

### 6.1 Methodology of the Survey

This survey was conducted mostly online, but also in person, and included various questions answered by German Kurds. Five Kurds were interviewed for the survey. The age range ofthe participants was between 16 and 67 years old.

Question: How did you immigrate to Germany?

The majority of the respondents – 4 out of 5 – statedthat they entered the country by airplane.

Question: What is your country of origin?

All of the respondents stated that they originally comefrom Syria (Rojava).

Question: When did you immigrate?

All respondents immigrated at different times.

Question: How long did it take you to learn German

Of the respondents, 3 stated that they learned German within 6 months. The other 2 people, however, needed approximately 1 year to learn the language.

Question: Could you imagine returning to your homeland?

3 of the respondents answered “no” because they have rebuilt their lives here and could not imagine moving back again. 1 respondent answered “under certain circumstances,” meaning that if there were no war or oppression, they would return. The last respondent answered “yes”; despite having built a new life here in Germany, the person feels strong homesickness and would prefer to move back to their homeland.

## 7. Conclusion

Examining the development of the Kurdish language and identity, as well as the situation of the Kurds in Germany and other countries, provides deep insight into the reality of a people whose history has been shaped by oppression and remarkable resistance. Kurdish identity is not a simple concept, but rather a complex interaction of cultural, linguistic, and political elements that must constantly adapt to new challenges and conditions. It tells a story of loss and pain, but also of hope and strength.

The Kurdish language plays a particularly central role in this process. It is far more than just a means of communication. It carries memories and traditions within it. In this world, language is often connected to power, and the Kurds have painfully experienced how vulnerable languages can be. Banned, suppressed, and viewed as a threat, the Kurdish language was for a long time endangered with extinction. Yet it did not disappear – it was carried and spoken by proud people who refused to give up their language, who passed it on within their families and preserved it in their hearts. It is the best example that identity and culture cannot be erased as easily as oppressive regimes may hope.

The formation of Kurdish identity remains an ongoing process closely connected to historical conditions, social structures, and political realities. Over centuries, a strong and proud community has developed that, despite oppression, maintains a deep connection to its cultural roots. Persecution often made the Kurds even stronger, as it allowed them to demonstrate resistance. At the same time, Kurdish identity was also expanded and transformed through oppression.

Kurds in Germany show how identity can find a new place through migration. For many Kurds, Germany represents a place of safety and stability. Life in exile often means living in constant tension between preserving one's cultural roots and integrating into a new society. For the older generation, the challenge lies in keeping traditions and language alive, while younger Kurds often struggle with the expectations of their parents as well as those of the society around them.

It becomes clear how important the transmission of language and values is for preserving Kurdish identity. Parents who speak Kurdish with their children send a quiet but powerful message: "We will not give up. Our roots remain a part of us, no matter where we live." Yet especially among migrant communities, it becomes visible how quickly language and culture can be endangered if they are not actively spoken or honored. Kurdish families face the challenge of passing these important values on to the next generation without making them feel foreign or burdened by them.

Life for the Kurdish community in Germany consists not only of challenges but also of opportunities. Kurdish associations, cultural centers, and networks play a major role in keeping identity alive. In Germany, safe spaces are created where Kurdish history, language, and culture can be celebrated – something that was often impossible in their countries of origin.

This gives hope and shows that Kurdish identity can be preserved and further developed.

Identity is alive, changeable, and adaptable, but it requires a safe environment in order to grow. Kurdish identity is an example of how culture and community can survive even under difficult circumstances when the people who carry that culture refuse to give up. It is a sign of strength and resilience, but also of the longing for recognition and a place in the world. This longing becomes especially visible in countries shaped by migration. Many Kurds in Germany wish not only for their culture and language to be respected, but also for their history and contribution to society to be appreciated. Supporting cultural diversity is not the responsibility of one side alone, but something that concerns all of us. The recognition of Kurdish identity enriches not only the Kurds themselves, but also the society in which they live. Identity shows us that diversity is not a threat, but a gain.

In the end, what remains is the understanding that the history of the Kurds affects us all. It demonstrates how important it is to view identity and culture as human rights – as something that belongs to every one of us. Kurdish history reminds us that cultural diversity is not something to be taken for granted, but often requires a long and painful struggle. Yet it also reminds us that this struggle is not in vain. The strength and pride with which the Kurdish community preserves its identity will forever remain an inspiration. The history of the Kurds is not only a story of oppression and loss, but also one of hope and resistance.

**In memory of Şehîd Andok – Konstantin Gedig**



**Lara Dizeyee**

***The Kurdish Dress: A Story of Identity,  
Memory, and Belonging.***

# *Kurdish Clothing: A Story of Identity' Memory' and Pride*

**By Lara Dizeyee**

Kurdish clothing is far more than fabric, embroidery, or traditional fashion. It is memory, identity, pride, resistance, belonging, and storytelling woven into every detail. For generations, Kurdish garments have carried the spirit of a people deeply connected to their land, history, and culture.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Kurdish clothing is the meaning hidden within its details. The way a turban is wrapped, the type of fabric chosen, the colors used, the embroidery, belts, layers, and even the movement of the garment can reveal a person's region, tribe, or social background. In women's clothing, fabrics, shine, layering, and colors often reflect family traditions, regional identity, or the significance of an occasion. Colors themselves carry deep symbolism.

*Lara Dizeyee is a Kurdish-American fashion designer and the Founder & Creative Director of Lara Dizeyee Haute Couture. Known for blending Kurdish heritage with contemporary couture, her work transforms cultural identity into modern storytelling through fashion.*

*Born in Vienna and raised in the United States, Lara comes from the historic House of Dizeyee, one of the most prominent families in Kurdistan. Her creative vision is deeply influenced by Kurdish history, diplomacy, literature, and cultural memory.*

*Since launching her fashion house in 2022, Lara has gained international recognition through collections presented at Paris and Milan Fashion Week. Her designs have been featured by Vogue Arabia and international media platforms, celebrating Kurdish identity on the global stage.*

*Through her work, Lara aims to preserve heritage while introducing the beauty, resilience, and elegance of Kurdish culture to the world.*



Gold often represents celebration and elegance, white symbolizes purity and peace, while red reflects strength, love, and sacrifice. Green, yellow, and red naturally connect to Kurdish identity and the Kurdish flag, carrying emotional and cultural significance.



Across Kurdistan, every region expresses its identity through a distinct visual language. Some areas are known for soft, flowing fabrics, while others use heavier textures, structured silhouettes, or stronger wrapping styles. The shawls, sleeves, waist wraps, and head coverings may differ subtly from one place to another, yet those details hold meaning for Kurdish eyes. A single detail can tell an entire story.



Traditional Kurdish clothing reflects identity in powerful ways. It tells the story of where a person comes from, the community they belong to, and the values they carry. For Kurds, clothing has never been merely something worn on the body; it is something carried with dignity. When Kurdish men and women wear traditional clothing, especially during important occasions, it becomes a statement of pride and belonging—a visible connection to ancestors, mountains, songs, and shared memories.

Kurdish clothing is not only beautiful, but also practical. Many traditional garments were designed to suit daily life, movement, mountain environments, weather conditions, and hard work. Waist wraps, for example, can support the lower back and core, especially for men who spent long hours working, traveling, or carrying heavy loads. The layered structure protects against cold, sun, and dust, while the loose designs allow comfort and freedom of movement. These elements reveal the intelligence behind Kurdish clothing—where beauty, dignity, and functionality exist together.

What makes Kurdish clothing unique compared to many traditional styles around the world is its balance between softness and strength. The flowing silhouettes, colorful fabrics, embroidery, and layered textures create elegance, while the overall presence of the clothing reflects resilience and pride. Especially in women's clothing, there is a remarkable harmony between femininity and power.

Today, wearing Kurdish clothing represents much more than tradition. It symbolizes identity, survival, and cultural continuity. Throughout history, Kurdish language, clothing, and cultural symbols were at times restricted or targeted, which transformed traditional clothing into a symbol of existence itself. Wearing Kurdish clothing today is not only an act of beauty, but also an act of remembrance and honor toward previous generations.



Preserving culture does not mean freezing it in the past. It means allowing it to evolve while carrying its spirit forward. When Kurdish clothing appears on international platforms, it becomes more than fashion—it becomes a message to the world that Kurdish culture is alive, proud, rich in beauty, and worthy of being seen and understood.



Fashion has the ability to communicate without translation. A garment can tell a story before a single word is spoken. For this reason, Kurdish fashion can serve as a form of cultural diplomacy—introducing the world to Kurdish history, beauty, and emotion in a way that feels elegant, modern, and universal.

# Eastern Kurdistan

Eastern Kurdistan is a part of Greater Kurdistan located within the geographical borders of present-day Iran. In reality, Kurds inhabit a large portion of Iranian territory, and the Zagros Mountains are regarded as the homeland, historical landscape, and cultural root of the Kurdish people.

## Provinces and Kurdish Cities

Eastern Kurdistan consists of four provinces:

- Kurdistan
- West Azerbaijan
- Ilam
- Kermanshah

## Cities in Kurdistan Province

Sanandaj, Saqqez, Baneh, Marivan, Dehgolan, Qorveh, Kamyaran, Hawraman, Bijar, Divandarreh, Sarvabad, Sarishabad, Shuyesheh, Chenareh, Zarrineh, Delbaran, and Babarashani.

*Shadi Gholami is from the city of Sanandaj in Eastern Kurdistan. She is 32 years old and is known as a singer, daf player, and percussionist.*

*She has been active in the artistic and cultural fields for more than 18 years, particularly in music, the arts, and promoting the role of women in the artistic sphere.*

*Most of her activities have taken place in Kurdistan, where she has organized and performed special women-only concerts and collaborated with Kurdish television channels and cultural programs.*

*Through her work, she has played a significant role in supporting Kurdish culture, enhancing women's participation in the arts, and preserving traditional Kurdish music.*



## Cities in Kurdistan Province

Sanandaj, Saqqez, Baneh, Marivan, Dehgolan, Qorveh, Kamyaran, Hawraman, Bijar, Divandarreh, Sarvabad, Sarishabad, Shuyesheh, Chenareh, Zarrineh, Delbaran, and Babarashani.



# Cities in West Azerbaijan

Bukan, Mahabad, Urmia, Naqadeh, Oshnavieh, Shno/Piranshahr.

# Cities in Kermanshah Province

Javanrud, Paveh, Sahneh, Dalahu, Sarpol-e Zahab, Qasr-e Shirin, Salas-e Babajani, Sonqor, Koliai, Kangavar, Eslamabad-e Gharb, Ravansar, and Gilan-e Gharb.

# Cities in Ilam Province

Abdanan, Eyvan, Darrehshahr, Dehloran, Badreh, Mehran, Malekshahi, Sirvan, Chardavol, Sarableh, Pahleh, and Musian.

Each of these provinces and cities contains thousands of ancient and historical villages nestled within the lush and beautiful landscapes of Kurdistan.

# The Kurdish Language in Eastern Kurdistan

The Kurdish language is the principal language of writing and cultural expression in Eastern Kurdistan. It includes several dialects and branches, such as:

- Sorani (Ardalani, Mukriani)
- Hawrami/Gorani
- Kurmanji
- Kalhori and Feyli
- Lori
- Laki
- Zazaki

# Nature and Landscapes

The green landscapes and natural beauty of Kurdistan rank among the most remarkable regions of Iran and include many exceptional natural and tourist sites.



# Major Mountains

Mount Shaho, Chel Cheshmeh, Avidar, Kosalan, Paraw, Manesht and Qalarang, Dalahu.

# Caves and Natural Sites

Kereftu Cave, Quri Qala Cave, Saholan Cave, Aqa Mir Cave, Bat Cave, Barazard Cave, Khor Magzan Cave, Telesm Cave, Paraw Cave.

# Springs, Waterfalls, and Rivers

Baba Gorgor, Qalqaleh, Bil, Sirwan River, Zarivar Lake, Geravan, Shafa Spring, Siyah Cheshmeh, Kani Mamatke, Shalmash Waterfall, Palangan Spring, Divznav, Goyle Waterfall.

# Tourist Attractions

Qeshlaq Dam, Vahdat Dam, Hassanabad Fortress, Qamchqai Fortress, Hawraman Takht, Palangan.

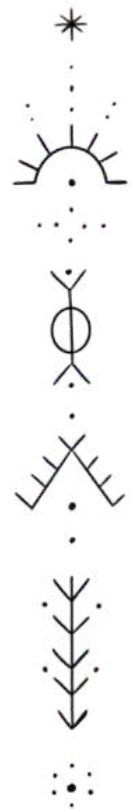
# Traditions and Festivals

- The Ceremony of a Thousand Dafs
- Pir Shalyar Wedding Festival
- Shahmaran Rituals
- Bilendan Ceremonies
- Various music and arts festivals

# The Role of Women

Women play an important and influential role in the artistic and cultural life of Eastern Kurdistan.

They have established various artistic groups and participate actively in cultural events worldwide. One of the well-known women's music groups is "Kizhan."



# Historical Sites and Monuments

- Asaf Vaziri Mansion
- Khosro Khan Mansion
- Moshir Divan Mansion
- Ziwiye Fortress

## Religions and Beliefs

Eastern Kurdistan is home to several religions and belief systems:

- Islam (majority)
- Yarsan / Ahl-e Haqq
- Kakai
- Christianity
- Judaism
- Zoroastrianism



## Religious Sites

The Grand Mosque of Sanandaj, Tekkes and Khanqahs of Kurdish dervishes, Churches, Fire Temples of Hawraman, the historic Quran of Negel village, Baba Gorgor Shrine, Imamzadeh Hajar Khatun, Imamzadeh Pir Omar, and Pir Shalyar Shrine.

## Music of Eastern Kurdistan

### Traditional Musical Instruments

**DAF:** The daf has been recognized as an important historical instrument in Kurdistan Province and is considered a symbol of ancient Kurdish culture, especially in dervish lodges and spiritual ceremonies. Through artists such as Bijan Kamkar and many musical groups, it has gained international recognition.

**Tanbur:** The tanbur is a sacred and spiritual instrument in Kermanshah and plays a central role among the Yarsan and Ahl-e Haqq communities during religious ceremonies.

**Lori Kamancheh:** The kamancheh is played in Kermanshah, Lorestan, and Ilam and has deep historical roots in Kurdish music.

## Prominent Musicians of Eastern Kurdistan

Nasir Razazi, Mazhar Khaleqi, Hasan Zirak, Ali Akbar Moradi, Kayhan Kalhor, The Kamkar Family, The Andalibi Family, Mamle, and Baba Shahabi.

The music of Eastern Kurdistan forms an essential part of Kurdish history and culture and has always been deeply connected to everyday Kurdish life.

## Actors and Cinema Artists

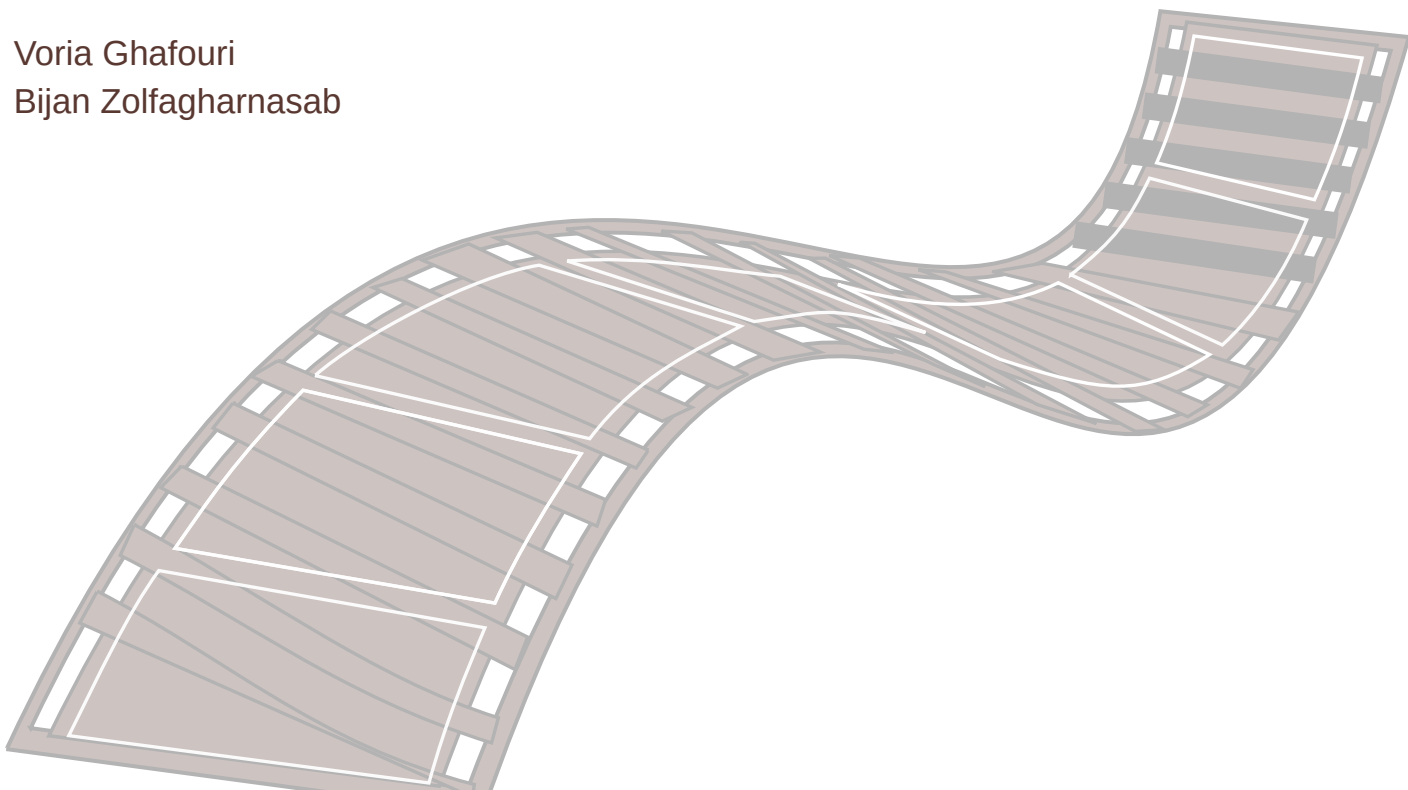
Qotbeddin Sadeghi, Navid Mohammadzadeh, Hootan Shakiba, Saeed Aghakhani, Maryam Boubani, and Farhad Aslani.

## Sports

Traditional sports such as wrestling, strength sports, and martial arts are highly popular among Kurds.

### Notable Athletes

- Voria Ghafouri
- Bijan Zolfagharnasab



# Economy and Livelihood

Agriculture in Eastern Kurdistan has developed extensively thanks to abundant natural water resources, favorable climate conditions, and fertile lands. The region is an important producer of wheat, fruits, and vegetables in Iran.

Animal husbandry also plays a major economic role due to Kurdistan's natural environment.

In the modern scientific and technological era, Eastern Kurdistan has produced many respected engineers, physicians, and scholars.

## The Young Generation and Contemporary Music

In his famous song “Khweshka Khasekam,” Hossein Safamanesh refers to traditional Kurdish clothing and its rich decorative patterns as symbols of Kurdish identity and heritage.

Shadi Gholami is a singer and women's rights activist who also works in Kurdish sociology and arts. One of her most notable songs is “Woman,” which highlights the many roles of women in society and family, as well as their struggles, hopes, and resilience.

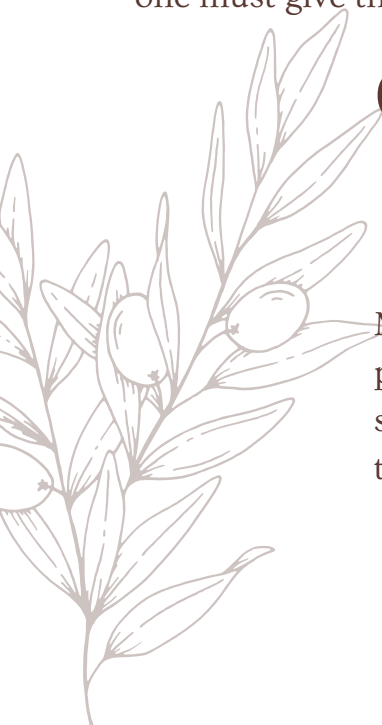
One golden verse from the song says:

“Here, being a woman is very difficult –  
one must give their soul just to live for a moment.”

## Other Well-Known Singers

- Foad Golnasab
- Roozbeh Mosallah

Many traditional singers and folk musicians of Eastern Kurdistan preserve authentic Kurdish musical traditions and sing about themes such as freedom, love, separation, patriotism, longing and sorrow, and the hardships of life.



# *Sayyid Ali Asghar: the euphonious voice that rewrote Kurdish history*

Born in 1882 in the village of salwat near sina, Sayyid Ali Asghar was one of the first memorable Kurdish singer to have his mellisonant voice recorded. Through his legendary melodies he left a everlasting mark on Kurdish music, culture and national identity. Most kurds and Iranians praised him for his known unique voice and musical style. One of his unforgettable pieces: Xamgin W DI Pashewm, which was recorded almost a hundred years ago!

## **Early life and child:**

Sayyid Ali Asghar son of Sayyid Ibrahim was born into a eminent and religious family. The beginning of his gift started when he was trained for quran recitation and vocal discipline at a young age in a mosque by his teacher, Sheikh Abd Ol-mo'men. People then quickly became astonished at how a young boy's voice could so ethereal, causing his reputation to extent far beyond kurdistan, earning him an invitation to recite in egypt. Growing up kurdistani was ringed by kurdish culture, tradition, poetry, celebration and quran recitation ; which later pursued in his music. Music slowly bloomed into his voice, his culture and his enviroment. This kind of combination made his music sound different and exclusive from persian classical singers. Eventhough he wasn't such of an expert singer at that time, yet he still preformed in local gatherings and private events since people honoured his voice.

*Shelan Shawan is a young Kurdish writer, illustrator, and content creator from Kurdistan. She is passionate about storytelling, creative writing, and Kurdish culture, with experience participating in school magazines and international writing competitions.*

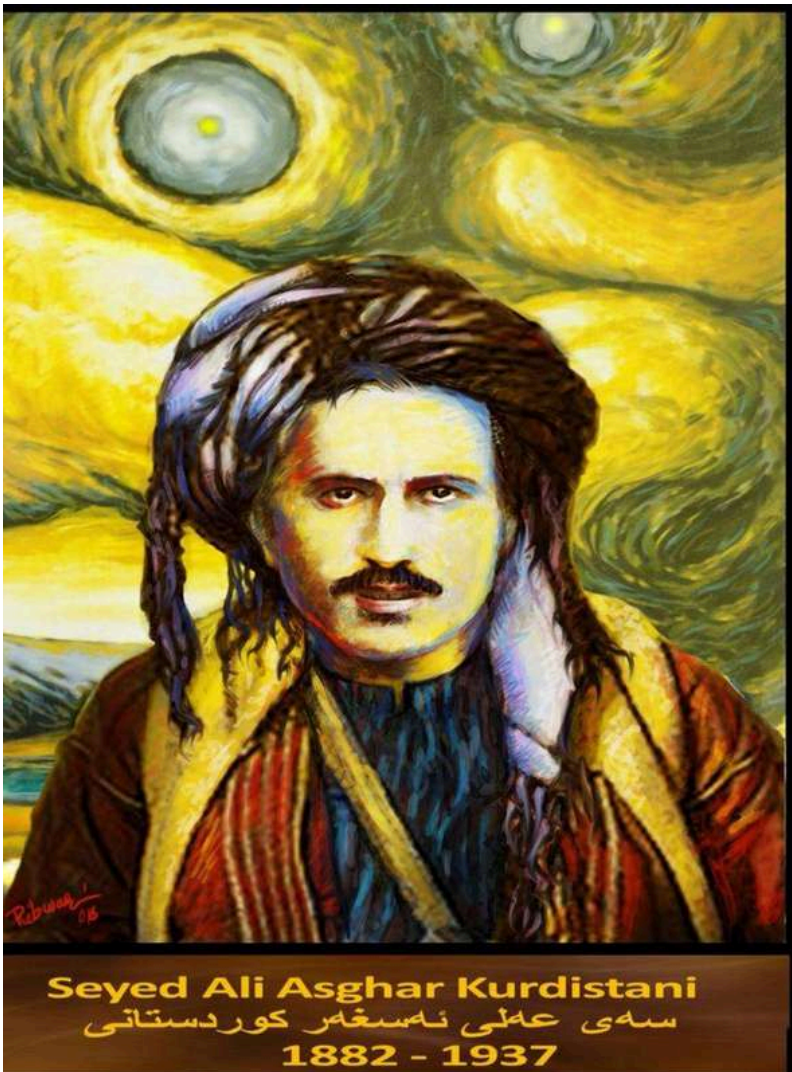
*Through her work, she aims to highlight Kurdish identity, local stories, and environmental awareness while continuing to develop her creative and literary skills.*



# From village gatherings to Tehran's spotlight:

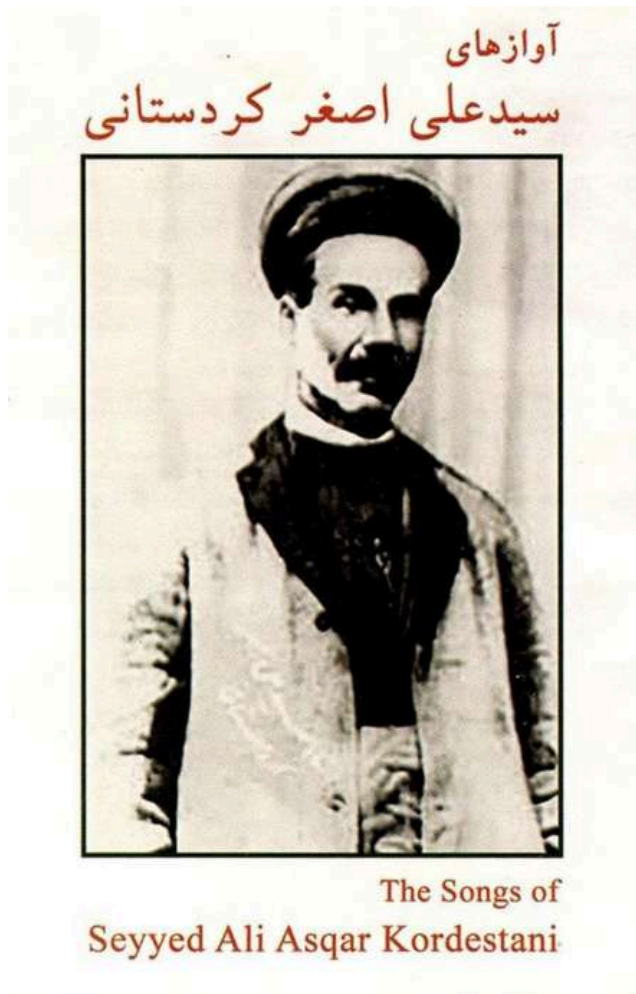
Around 1905 Sayyid Ali Asghar married Mahasharaf Khanum before gaining national recognition and was later blessed with three sons and two daughters. Being over 40 years old kurdistani was requested to visit Tehran by one of his supporters Mirza Ebrahim Khan. For him Tehran marked a path for bigger opportunity, modern recording and wider recognition for kurdish culture.

His presence in Tehran deeply amazed everyone who had never been introduced to kurdish music (in that style). Further more, he was later invited to a ceremony by Mirza Ebrahim Khan, where a famous female singer, Qamar-Ol-Moluk vaziri, was present. It was planned that she'd preform before Kurdistani at the ceremony, where everyone expected the female singer to dominate the event. However, when Kudistani started preforming the audience fell under his spell, his outstanding voice quickly made him the highlight of the ceremony. Musicians became shocked at the range and strength of his voice when he sang one pitch higher than Qamar-Ol-Moluk Vaziri.



After the ceremony ended many of the attendees and musicians demanded that Sayyid Ali Asghar stays in Tehran to pursue in his rare talent. Thanks to Mirza Ebrahim Khan's financial support, he stayed in tehran nearly a month, recording songs during the early gramophone era and becoming one of the firstkurdish singers to ever have his voice recorded, allowing his music to live on in the hearts of kurdish people for generations.

# When music became a voice for Kurdistan:



Sayyid Ali Asghar's voice wasn't just admired but it became a memory, a part of kurdish identity, symbol and culture; reminding them of their home and tradition. He sang in kurdish with pride at a time when kurdistan struggled to develop a voice of its own and be heard, while also gifting many iranians great admiration.

According to kurdish oral stories, Kurdistani would climb the mountains of salwatawa near city of sina from time to time. During the cold and quiet restless evenings he would sing into the night. People say his voice echoed so far across the mountains that the people in Sina would gather together to hear his singing with admiration, leaving many amazed by the strength and beauty of his voice.



## Legacy and Death:

Sayyid Ali Asghar passed away on 1936 at the age of 55 due to natural causes, and was buried in his village. His voice lived longer than his lifetime and is still to this day admired by many.



# *The First Aid Book in the Kurdish Language and Its Importance to Kurdish Society*

The difference between life and death can sometimes be measured in only a few minutes. In such critical moments, a medical professional is not always present, and ordinary individuals become the first line of response. This is where the importance of first aid education emerges. First aid books transform essential medical knowledge into practical skills that can be applied immediately in emergency situations. When such knowledge is presented in the Kurdish language, it not only contributes to saving lives but also strengthens the status of Kurdish and enriches its scientific and medical vocabulary. Therefore, the publication of a First Aid Book in Kurdish represents a significant step toward serving society while preserving and developing the Kurdish language.

*Zaradasht Baski is a Kurdish nurse, paramedic, and acute care specialist based in Finland. Holding a master's degree in acute care, he has extensive experience in emergency medicine, cardiology, intensive care, and operating room settings. He currently serves as a head nurse in a child welfare institution and is a certified first aid trainer with the Finnish Red Cross. In addition to his healthcare career, he lectures on multiculturalism in nursing and emergency care at Finnish universities and creates educational content in the Kurdish language through social media platforms.*



The importance of this book lies in its ability to provide medical and first aid information in a language that Kurdish-speaking communities can easily understand. This helps spread health awareness among people of different ages, educational backgrounds, and social groups. Furthermore, it empowers individuals to respond effectively to accidents, injuries, and medical emergencies before professional healthcare providers arrive.

From a linguistic perspective, the book is a valuable contribution to Kurdish educational and scientific literature. It introduces and standardizes medical terminology in Kurdish and encourages the use of the language in academic, healthcare, and professional environments. In addition, it demonstrates that Kurdish is fully capable of conveying specialized scientific knowledge and supporting educational development.

The book covers a broad range of topics related to first aid and emergency medical care. It explains common emergencies and injuries, including bleeding, burns, fractures, wounds, fainting, choking, poisoning, heart attacks, strokes, and heat-related illnesses. The book also discusses the causes and risk factors associated with these conditions, as well as the signs and symptoms that help identify them at an early stage.

In addition, the book provides clear and practical guidelines for managing each emergency situation. It outlines the appropriate first aid procedures and explains how immediate intervention can reduce complications and improve patient outcomes. The publication also includes information about medications and medical supplies commonly used in emergency care, such as antiseptics, bandages, and essential first aid equipment, together with explanations of their proper use and necessary precautions.



The publication of this book aims to achieve several important objectives. These include promoting health awareness and first aid knowledge within Kurdish communities, training individuals in the proper management of emergencies and accidents, reducing complications resulting from delays in providing first aid, increasing survival rates through timely intervention, and providing a reliable medical reference in the Kurdish language. Furthermore, the book seeks to support the development of Kurdish scientific terminology and foster a culture of social responsibility, cooperation, and humanitarian assistance during emergencies.

In conclusion, the First Aid Book in the Kurdish language is more than a medical guide; it is an educational and humanitarian initiative that contributes to improving public health awareness and protecting lives while simultaneously supporting the development of the Kurdish language and strengthening its presence in scientific and academic fields. Through the practical knowledge and guidance it provides, the book serves as an essential resource for anyone seeking to acquire life-saving skills and respond confidently and effectively to emergency situations. As such, it represents a valuable contribution both to Kurdish society and to the advancement of Kurdish-language educational resources.

## **Dr. Zaradasht Baski, Emergency Medicine Expert**

## **Dr. Akram Nassan, Chief Physician in Emergency and Ambulance Services**



# EPÎLEPSÎ



## Pêşgotin

Epîlepsî nexweşiyeye neurolojîk e ku tê de kesek ji ber çalakiya elektrîkî ya neasayî di mêjî de krizên dubare û bêsedem dijî.

## Sedemên

- . Birîndarbûna serî an trawmaya serî
- . Enfeksiyonên mêjî
- . Faktorên genetîkî
- . Felc an tumora mêjî
- . Kêmasiyên ji dayikbûnê an nexweşiyên pêşveçûnê
- . Sedemeke nenas (Idiopatik)

## Nîşaneyên

- . Krizên dubare
- . Windakirina hişmendiye
- . Tevgerên lertzîne yê bêkontrol
- . Guhertin an çirûskên nêranînê (dîtînê)
- . Tevlihevî piştî krîzê
- . Hesta tirsê an fikarê ji nişkê ve

## Diagnosi

- . EEG (Elektroensefalogram)
- . MRI / CT Scan (Wênekêşana mêjî)
- . Testên xwînê
- . Muayeneya neurolojîk



## *(ABCD) PROTOKOLA DI ALÛKARIYA YEKEM DE*



A - Airway (Rêya nafase)  
Kontrol bike ka rêya nafase vekirî ye an na.



B - Breathing (Bêhnvedan)  
Kontrol bike ka nexweş bêhna xwe bi normal dide.



C - Circulation (Xwîn rijandin)  
Kontrol bike ka xwîn rijandin heye an na. Ger hebe, hewl bide ku rawestîni.

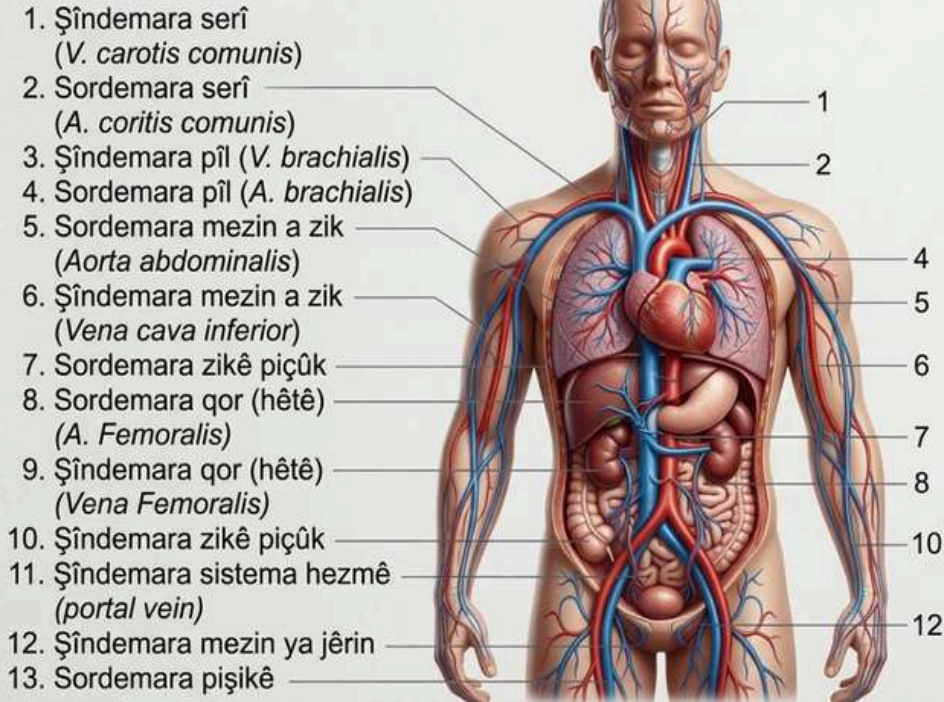


D- Disability (Hişmendî)  
Kontrol bike ka nexweş hişyar e û dikare bersivê bide.

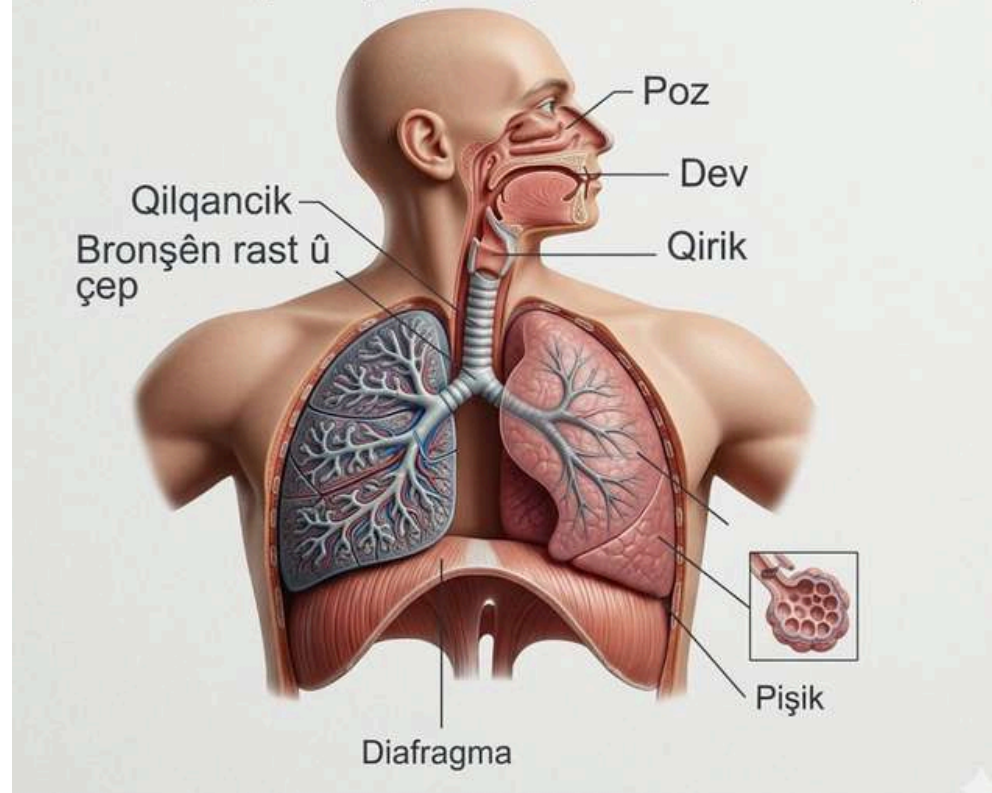


E-Kontrol beden bike Ger nexweş bêhna xwe nade:  
1) Gazî alîkariya yekemnin bike.  
2) Dest bi CPR bike (30 pêçandinên singê, paşê 2 nafas)

## Detailed Human Circulatory System (Sîstema Gergira Xwînê)



## Kurdish Respiratory System (Sîstema Bêhnstandinê)



# Akram Naasan

## Chief Emergency Physician

• Mustafa Abdi: Dr. Akram, how did the idea of Afrin Times begin? What motivated you to launch this project?

Dr. Akram Naasan: The idea goes back many years, specifically to 1991 during the Kurdish uprising and the mass exodus toward the mountains. At that time, I returned from Europe to Kurdistan and founded a humanitarian organization whose activities later expanded to many regions, from the Balkans to Angola. We provided assistance to thousands of victims, displaced people, and refugees. That experience became an important milestone in understanding the suffering of peoples whose identity and history have been taken away from them.

*Dr. Akram Naasan is a Kurdish physician, humanitarian activist, and researcher with extensive experience in emergency and disaster medicine. Based in Germany, he has worked for many years in medical rescue services and humanitarian relief projects, contributing to emergency response efforts and international aid initiatives across different regions of the world.*

*Alongside his medical career, Dr. Naasan has shown a deep commitment to Kurdish cultural, historical, and intellectual issues. He is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Afrin Times, a platform dedicated to promoting Kurdish history, culture, identity, and scholarly research through multilingual publications and academic dialogue.*

*His work combines humanitarian values with intellectual engagement, focusing on preserving collective memory, supporting research, and strengthening awareness of Kurdish history and heritage. Through both medical service and cultural initiatives, he continues to advocate for knowledge, human dignity, and the protection of cultural identity.*



• Mustafa Abdi: Was that experience a direct reason for thinking about a Kurdish media project?

Dr. Akram Naasan: To a large extent, yes. During my humanitarian work, people would often ask me: “Where are you from?” I would answer, “I am a Kurd from Kurdistan.” However, many did not understand what I meant. At times, I was even subjected to ridicule and mockery, particularly by some Arab nationalists who would say: “There are no Kurds, and there is no Kurdistan.”

At those moments, I remembered the famous German writer Karl May, who authored several books, including *Wild Kurdistan*. I realized then that if we do not introduce ourselves to the world, no one else will do it on our behalf. This is at the heart of our problem.

We need media platforms with a clear Kurdish and Kurdistan identity, especially in the English language, to introduce the world to Kurdish history and the reality of the Kurdish struggle, and to confront the campaigns of distortion and erasure of identity that our neighbors have practiced for decades.



• Mustafas Abdi: Will the magazine be open to diverse opinions?

Dr. Akram Naasan: Exactly. The idea of Afrin Times magazine and website emerged as a platform carrying a clear Kurdish and Kurdistan identity. The name does not refer only to Afrin itself; rather, it carries a broader symbolism. Afrin is an important Kurdish city in Kurdistan, and therefore the name represents the Kurdish cause in all its dimensions.

• Mustafa Abdi: What kinds of issues will the magazine address?

Akram Naasan: Afrin Times will cover a wide range of issues concerning the Kurds and Kurdistan, including history, philosophy, literature, science, culture, politics, and questions of identity. Our writers will also tackle complex and controversial topics and present them to readers in a clear, scholarly, and balanced manner.



• Mustafa Abdi: Will the magazine be open to diverse opinions?

Akram Naasan: Absolutely. The magazine will be published quarterly and will welcome a variety of contributions and viewpoints within its editorial guidelines. We want Afrin Times to serve as a free forum for discussion and a space where ideas can compete and evolve for the better, because the progress of nations can only be achieved through dialogue, criticism, and free thinking.

• Mustafa Abdi: You have spoken a great deal about the magazine's Kurdistan identity. What exactly do you mean by that?

Akram Naasan: We mean that the identity of Afrin Times is rooted in everything related to the Kurdish people: their identity, history, heritage, past and present, the tragedies and disasters they have endured, and the conspiracies that have targeted them. We believe that the survival of any people, including the Kurdish people, depends on preserving their heritage, culture, and documented history. This is precisely why our adversaries have always sought to destroy and erase that collective memory.

• Mustafa Abdi: Will the magazine also support Kurdish researchers and students?

Akram Naasan: Yes, and this is one of our most important goals. The magazine will include contributions from a wide range of scientific and cultural disciplines, with special attention given to supporting young researchers. We will also dedicate a section to promoting the writings and research produced by Kurdish students in Europe and around the world, particularly work related to Kurdish history and culture. Our aim is to help them publish their studies in schools and universities, and we will provide whatever resources we can to support this effort.

• Mustafa Abdi: How will the magazine be distributed and reach its readers?

Akram Naasan: The magazine will be published quarterly in PDF format, while articles and research papers will be released regularly on the website. We also have future plans to develop better methods of distribution that will ensure the content reaches people everywhere in an easy and free manner.

• Mustafa Abdi: A final word?

Akram Naasan: We are working to make Afrin Times present in every home and to ensure that we can continue writing, researching, and persevering. For us, this is another form of struggle—a struggle to reclaim stolen Kurdish rights and to protect our memory and identity from being lost.



# ***The Gulf and the Turn of Time***

## **Article by Peter Müller, a former German military officer**

Israel and the USA have demonstrated their technological superiority against Iran and are attempting to leverage this into a negotiated outcome.

Following the attacks launched against Israel by its ally, Iran was not surprised by the counterstrike from the "Great Satan" and the "Little Satan." As expected, Iranian forces demonstrated that they can mount an asymmetric resistance against technological superiority—proving their capacity for endurance and their ability to absorb heavy losses. The Iranian Mullah regime had previously proven this capability during the Iran-Iraq War and has now revived that tradition. Moreover, the country's mountainous terrain does not lend itself to the kind of simple, rapid ground operations that would be required to disarm the Revolutionary Guards.

There was speculation that Israel and the U.S. intended to strike at Iran's political leadership in such a way that it would either give up or be forced to make concessions. Yet the regime has survived. The security forces did not defect, the opposition did not organize a coup, and the population did not rise up. Rather than hastening the collapse of the ruling class, the war has made the internal situation more complicated.

Furthermore, the ongoing executions in Iran reveal that the regime – which has lost all domestic legitimacy – is exploiting the external threat it itself provoked as a pretext to liquidate the opposition movement. This, too, was to be expected. The regime responded with brutal force to the protests that erupted following the death of Mahsa "Jina" Amini – a Kurdish-Iranian woman who died on September 16, 2022, while in the custody of Tehran's notorious "morality police." It reacted with similar severity to the nationwide protests triggered by the depreciation of the national currency (the rial), rampant inflation, and growing economic insecurity. Reports suggest that thousands of opposition activists have been killed. The Mullah regime has placed particular blame for this escalation on the USA and Israel. It remains difficult to assess the extent to which the regime is still under domestic political pressure.

In recent days, an end to the conflict with Iran appears – at least in the Western press – to be within tantalizing reach. However, US President Donald Trump himself continues to vacillate between hoping for a favorable deal and issuing threats of total annihilation should Tehran fail to act swiftly. From the perspective of U.S. President Donald Trump, the state of negotiations regarding a possible end to the war with Iran is not yet satisfactory. During a cabinet meeting at the White House, he reported on Iran's willingness to negotiate, even though the U.S. government is not yet satisfied with the offers. Trump reiterated the threat that the U.S. would either strike a deal or continue fighting, "finishing the job." The mere hope of an agreement is enough to trigger a positive reaction in the stock markets and send oil prices falling by four percent – demonstrating nothing so much as the acute vulnerability of an unprepared West.

The decision to take action against Iran exposes the limits of American power. In the case of Iran, airstrikes unaccompanied by ground troops – even if they inflict massive destruction – cannot impose one's full will upon a determined, religiously motivated adversary.

Here, too, the turn of time and the end of the American decades are becoming clear. Donald Trump's statement that the war against Iran is a success and will end quickly reflects more the hopes of the U.S. side than the reality on the ground. Military superiority without a viable political strategy usually ends up being resource- and cost-intensive – or worse. It almost always exposes strategic uncertainty.

The war with Iran has already severely depleted the U.S. arsenal. The U.S. think tank CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies) concludes that it would take at least three years to replenish stocks of three key weapons systems that were heavily used in the war with Iran. In the U.S., this assessment is fueling concerns that the military may not be sufficiently prepared for a potential future conflict with China.

According to the report, this affects Tomahawk cruise missiles, which are used for strikes deep into enemy territory, as well as Patriot and THAAD interceptor missiles for defending against enemy missiles and drones. Even if the U.S. reaches a good deal with Tehran, it will come at a very high cost.

The sanctions-hardened regime in Tehran appears to be pursuing a simple strategy. They will win this round if they can hold out longer than the U.S. They have been working toward this for years and are learning from past setbacks. The cells of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards operate in a decentralized manner, so that decapitation strikes cannot have as great an impact. Every small Iranian success against individual targets becomes a success for the regime. An agreement that allows the U.S. to declare itself the victor seems to be unlikely to be of much interest to the Iranian side. The nuclear component is not off the table. Neither staunch Islamists nor Russian strategists share Western reservations regarding these weapons.

If the U.S.—also with an eye toward the midterm elections in the U.S.—is likely willing to accept a deal that leaves this issue out of the equation, it remains Israel's stated goal to prevent the nuclear threat to Israel posed by Iran.

Within the anti-Western coalition of China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran, Iran is arguably the weakest member. While there has been no open support for Iran, it has received arms shipments.

The helplessness of the U.S. in this regard does not bode well for the near future. The support for Iran from this group is limited, but effective enough. Trump's hopes of turning China into a benevolent partner of the U.S.—including with regard to Iran—through deals involving aircraft and soybeans are likely to remain illusory, even though the closure of the Strait of Hormuz would also affect China's oil imports.

American criticism of NATO's cautious approach and of the U.S.'s European allies is difficult. Even though the vital interests of Europeans are also at stake, NATO is and remains a defensive alliance. Furthermore, while Europeans have announced the end of their period of weakness, they have by no means implemented this yet. Effective support for the U.S. in this conflict is hardly conceivable given the capability profiles of the Europeans. At the same time, the dramatic urgency of restoring the European armed forces' ability to defend themselves must be viewed and assessed primarily in the context of Russian aggression.

Military action is usually tied to economic imperatives. The Strait of Hormuz bottleneck demonstrates just how vulnerable the global economy is to blackmail. All it takes are modest means, such as drones, mines, and sporadic attacks—capabilities that are not easily taken away from an Iranian adversary. This applies not only to oil—although high oil prices and emergency releases of strategic reserves are striking—but also to shipments of urea, sulfur, and LNG, the raw materials for fertilizer production. The consequences thus affect the global economy and global food supply, while self-sufficient regions like communist China, North Korea, or Iran are far less impacted.

We are witnessing a suspension of all rules. While some are making deals, others are preparing for what Vladimir Putin puts it: “The end of Western dominance.” The answer to this challenge is greater solidarity among the states and forces of a free and liberal world.

