



THE CONFEDERATION IS THE HOME
OF ALL KURDS

how
DID THE
CONFEDERATION
START?

*Kurdish Culture: A Journey
Through Colour, Tradition,
and Natural Beauty*

THE BEAUTY OF KURDISH PEOPLE IS AS VARIED
AND RICH AS THEIR CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS.

EDITION ONE



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We believe in the power of **individuals and the community**

from the
EDITOR
Letter



Dear Readers,
It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I welcome you to the first edition of Diaspora Magazine, Rewend. This publication is a labour of love, born from a desire to unite and strengthen the Kurdish community in the diaspora.

The Kurdish diaspora spans Europe, the United States, and the wider world. Despite this significant presence, our community has yet to become an effective soft power supporting the legitimate Kurdish cause and the Kurdistan region. One of our primary challenges has been the lack of organised, serious, and precise efforts to instill a sense of belonging to Kurdistan among all Kurdish generations in the diaspora. Many of our people remain disconnected from their cultural roots and language.

Recognizing these challenges, the Confederation of Kurdish Communities in the Diaspora was established. This organisation is dedicated to addressing these issues, bringing Kurdish capabilities together, and fostering a sense of homeland, language, and culture among Kurds in the diaspora. Our goal is to become an effective soft force supporting the Kurdish cause.

As we launch Rewend, I am reminded of a powerful quote by Nelson Mandela: “There is no passion to be found playing small—in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.” This sentiment encapsulates our vision for the Kurdish diaspora. We aim to inspire and empower our community to reach its full potential and contribute meaningfully to our shared cause.

In line with this mission, we have decided to publish a diverse, general, quarterly magazine in English and Kurdish, catering to all Kurds from the four parts of Kurdistan. This magazine, Rewend, features content in both Sorani (Aramaic script) and Kurmanji (Latin script), as well as other dialects such as Hawarami, Kalhuri, Zazaki, and Badini.

Together with my dedicated team, we have worked tirelessly to bring this first issue to you. We hope that it resonates with you and serves as a platform for our community to share literary works, activities, and insights. We eagerly await your contributions on various topics and welcome your comments, suggestions, and criticisms to help us improve and grow.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to embarking on this journey together.

Davan Y Khalil
Editor in Chief



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Kurdish Culture: A Journey Through Colour, Tradition, and Natural Beauty

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The beauty of Kurdish people is as varied and rich as their cultural expressions.

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Kurdish Culture: A Journey Through Colour, Tradition, and Natural Beauty

Written by: Davan Y Khalil

Kurdish culture is a tapestry woven with vibrant colours, rich traditions, and breathtaking landscapes. Spanning regions in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria, the Kurdish people possess a unique cultural identity that has been preserved and celebrated over centuries. From their distinctive clothing to the striking beauty of their homeland, the Kurds offer a compelling glimpse into a world where heritage and natural splendour intertwine.

One of the most striking aspects of Kurdish culture is its traditional clothing. Kurdish attire is renowned for its vivid colours and intricate designs, reflecting both individual and communal identities.

Men often wear the “shal u shapik,” a combination of loose-fitting trousers and a shirt, typically adorned with a wide belt. Over this, they might wear a vest or jacket, which is sometimes richly embroidered. Women’s clothing, on the other hand, is a feast for the eyes, featuring long dresses with vibrant patterns, often paired with sequined vests and colourful scarves. These garments are not only beautiful but also hold deep cultural significance, representing various aspects of Kurdish life, including regional affiliations, marital status, and social roles.

The beauty of Kurdish people is as varied and rich as their cultural expressions. With skin tones ranging from fair to olive and dark, Kurdish people showcase a wide spectrum of natural beauty. This diversity is a testament to the historical crossroads at which Kurdish regions are situated, where numerous ethnicities and cultures have mingled over millennia. Their pride in their heritage is often reflected in their faces, marked by strong features, expressive eyes, and a warmth that exudes hospitality and resilience.

The Kurdish landscape is equally captivating. The regions inhabited by Kurds are often characterised by rugged mountains, verdant valleys, and pristine rivers. The Zagros and Taurus mountain ranges offer dramatic backdrops to

everyday life, while the fertile plains and plateaus provide a stark contrast to the rocky highlands. In spring, fields burst into a riot of colours, with wildflowers carpeting the meadows, while in autumn, the landscape transforms into a palette of golden hues. These natural settings not only provide stunning vistas, but also play a crucial role in the cultural and economic life of the Kurdish people, who have traditionally been pastoralists and farmers.

The Kurds’ relationship with their environment is deeply rooted in their cultural practices and traditions. Festivals such as Newroz, the Kurdish New Year celebrated on March 21, are often held outdoors, with communities gathering in nature to welcome the arrival of spring. This celebration involves music, dancing, and the lighting of bonfires, symbolising renewal and the victory of light over darkness. The landscape, thus, becomes a living part of the cultural narrative, a place where history, myth, and daily life converge.

Kurdish music and dance are vital cultural expressions that further highlight the beauty of their heritage. Traditional dances, such as the “govend” or “halparke,” are often performed during celebrations and social gatherings. These dances are typically performed in a circle, symbolising unity and community, with participants holding hands and moving rhythmically to the beat of the “daf” (a type of drum) and other traditional instruments. The music accompanying these dances is rich and varied, ranging from joyous, fast-paced tunes to somber, reflective melodies, each telling a story of the Kurdish experience.

The artistry of the Kurdish people is not limited to music and dance; their craftsmanship is evident in the intricate designs of their carpets, the meticulous embroidery of their clothing, and the detailed metalwork of their jewellery. Kurdish carpets, known for their durability and unique patterns, often depict geometric shapes and motifs inspired by nature, embodying both aesthetic beauty and practical utility. These crafts are more than just decorative; they represent a way of life, passed down through generations, and are integral to Kurdish cultural identity.

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Despite facing significant political and social challenges, the Kurdish people have maintained a strong sense of identity and pride in their heritage.
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Despite facing significant political and social challenges, the Kurdish people have maintained a strong sense of identity and pride in their heritage. The resilience of Kurdish culture is a testament to their enduring spirit and commitment to preserving their traditions. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in Kurdish culture, both within the Kurdish community and among the international audience, with efforts to document and promote Kurdish history, language, and arts.

The beauty of Kurdish culture lies in its ability to blend tradition with contemporary influences, creating a dynamic and evolving cultural landscape.

From the vibrant clothing that speak volumes about their identity, to the diverse and striking beauty of their people, and the breathtaking landscapes that frame their lives, the Kurds offer a rich cultural heritage that continues to inspire and captivate.

In celebrating Kurdish culture, we not only honour the Kurdish people but also recognise the broader human story of resilience, creativity, and the enduring connection between people and their environment. The Kurdish experience reminds us of the importance of preserving cultural diversity and the beauty that lies within it.





The Confederation is the Home of all Kurds

Written by: KDC Staff

Interview: **Shifa Barzani** - General Supervisor of the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation

In this exclusive interview with Rewend magazine, Shifa Barzani, Supervisor General of Kurdistan Diaspora Center, talks about the importance and goals of establishing the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation and the most important activities and steps to be taken. The Confederation declares very clearly that the Confederation is the home of all Kurds, without discrimination.

Interview: Rewend Magazine

Diaspora: Why is the existence of the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation important? Did you feel a void? What would be the problems and what would be the shortcomings without this organisation?

Shifa Barzani: First of all, I congratulate the editorial staff, editors and writers of the first issue of Rewend magazine and hope that it will become the voice of Kurds in all four parts of the country.

Regarding your question, the establishment of the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation was an inevitable necessity, because the lack of a cultural organisation that pays attention to Kurdish culture, language and authenticity had created a gap between Kurds in the Diaspora and their national identity. The third generation of Kurds will be subjected to assimilation and completely dissolved in Western societies, separated from their nation and identity. An important force such as the Diaspora, which undoubtedly has an important position in lobbying





and finding friends and countries could not be ignored, so His Excellency President Barzani presented the issue of establishing this organisation in 2020.

Rewend: Since you took office as the Supervisor General of the Confederation, what is the level of progress in the Confederation? Has it been possible to gain the trust and confidence of a significant number of Kurds abroad, that this organisation is to serve them?

Shifa Barzani: I have started my work on the basis of a long-term program. We have divided the program into short-term, medium-term and long-term. So far, we are within the short-term phase, which includes organising meetings with Kurdish associations, organisations, personalities and society in the Diaspora. In this stage, we will get their views on how to expand the confederation and their opinions on how to work in the future. Overall, there is good progress and they have helped us to strengthen and advance the confederation. Although our work is a process and requires time, however, I am optimistic and believe that the Kurdish Diaspora will play a vital role in the future.

Rewend: We would like to hear from you and understand in detail what are the main goals of this confederation? What do you expect from it and what are your dreams for it?

Shifa Barzani: As I mentioned in the answer to the first question, the goal of the confederation is to preserve our culture and national identity. The Confederation works to bring the Kurdish language to all Kurds in its different dialects, and to revive the national holidays of all four parts of Kurdistan. It also works to unite Kurds under a national umbrella and supports the



SHIFA BARZANI

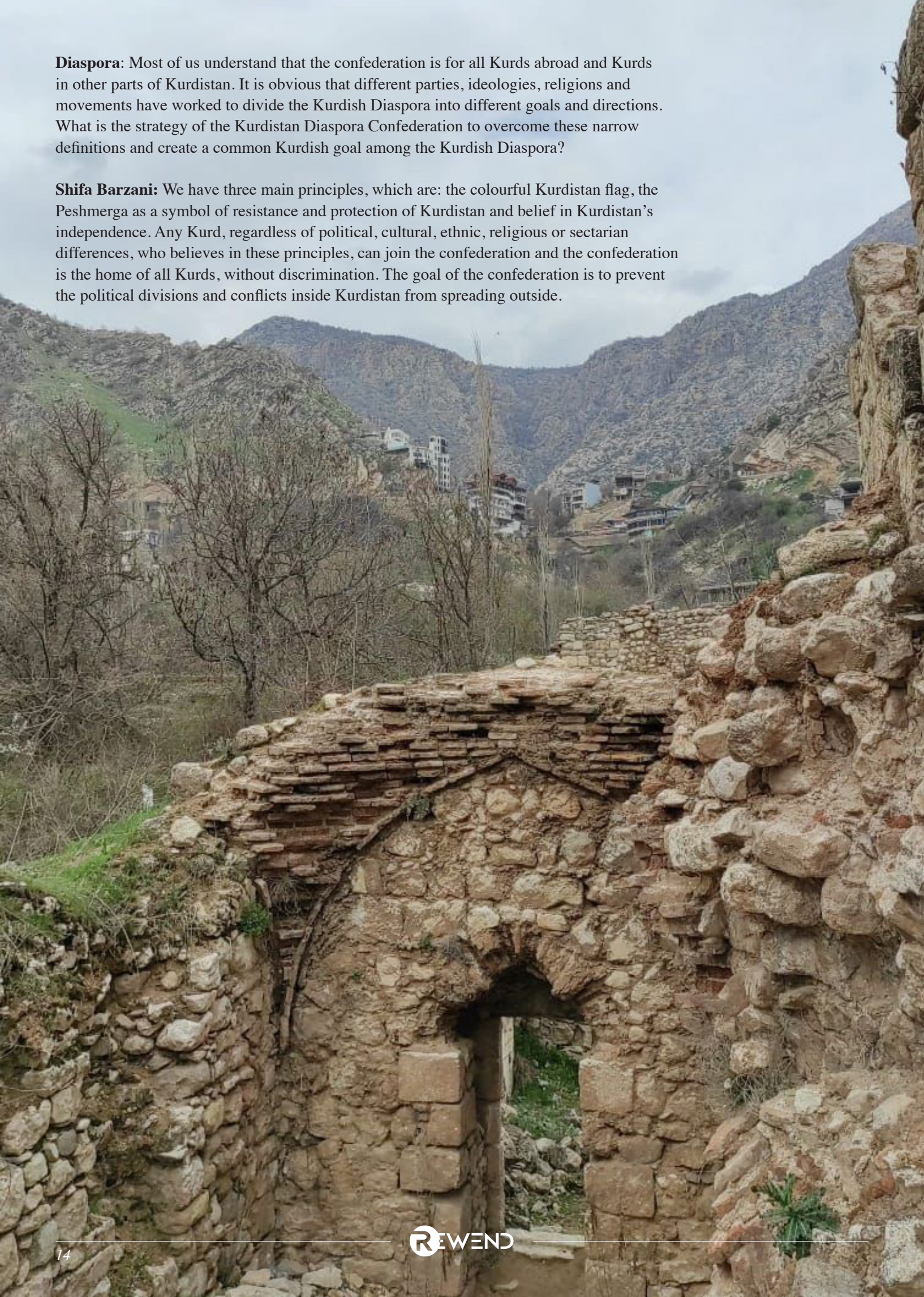
ALGEMEEN SUPERVISOR VOOR DE KOERDISCHE
GEMEENSCHAP BIJ BARZANI HOOFDKWARTIER

PURMEREND, 17 Sep 2023



Diaspora: Most of us understand that the confederation is for all Kurds abroad and Kurds in other parts of Kurdistan. It is obvious that different parties, ideologies, religions and movements have worked to divide the Kurdish Diaspora into different goals and directions. What is the strategy of the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation to overcome these narrow definitions and create a common Kurdish goal among the Kurdish Diaspora?

Shifa Barzani: We have three main principles, which are: the colourful Kurdistan flag, the Peshmerga as a symbol of resistance and protection of Kurdistan and belief in Kurdistan's independence. Any Kurd, regardless of political, cultural, ethnic, religious or sectarian differences, who believes in these principles, can join the confederation and the confederation is the home of all Kurds, without discrimination. The goal of the confederation is to prevent the political divisions and conflicts inside Kurdistan from spreading outside.





The Confederation Lobbies for the Independence of Kurdistan

Written by: Dr Ismail Kamil. President of the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation

It is estimated that approximately five million Kurdish refugees reside outside the borders of Kurdistan, spread across various countries globally. In response to the Kurdish diaspora's challenges and aspirations for social justice, numerous social, cultural, and political organisations have emerged worldwide.

The Kurdish Students Association (KSSE), established in 1956, marked the inception of Kurdish organisational efforts in Europe. Subsequently, the Association of Kurdistan Students Abroad (AKSA) was founded in 1976, followed by a multitude of other organisations and federations such as the Kurdistan Youth Union, HEVRA, KOMKAR, the Federation of Kurdistan Associations in Sweden, and the Kurdish Institute in Paris, among others across Europe and the former Soviet Union.

For over 70 years, Kurdish Revend has been steadfast in advocating for all parts of Kurdistan and the Kurdish people, playing a pivotal role in raising awareness of the Kurdish cause in their respective host countries, with significant focus on supporting the Kurdistan Region of Iraq politically and socially.

The Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation, inaugurated in Erbil on December 4-5, 2021, under the leadership of National President Mr. Masoud Barzani and attended by numerous party leaders and representatives from 14 centers and three Kurdish federations, has evolved into a critical entity in the Kurdish movement over the past two and a half years. Currently, it encompasses 42 centers, 11 federations, and numerous Kurdish associations spanning Europe, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. The Confederation is dedicated to uniting the Kurdish diaspora and continuing to advance the Kurdish cause collectively.

Key objectives of the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation include:

- Advocating through robust lobbying efforts for the independence of Kurdistan.
- Promoting unity within the Kurdistan Region and nurturing pride in Kurdish identity and territory, including the revered Kurdish flag.
- Establishing federations dedicated to writers, youth, women, academics, and artists to serve the Kurdish community and Kurdistan.
- Promoting the Kurdish language within Kurdistan by supporting language education and empowering native language instructors.
- Facilitating political engagement of Kurdish youth within their host countries.
- Combatting extremism and promoting non-violence.
- Supporting successful integration and adherence to host countries' laws.
- Fostering strong ties between Kurdistan and the Kurdish diaspora, particularly among Kurdish youth.
- Organising Kurdish traders in the diaspora and facilitating communication between them and Kurdistan.
- Establishing academic exchanges between Kurdish universities and institutions worldwide.
- Supporting Kurdish politicians in the diaspora running for municipal councils, regional offices, and parliaments.

Since its inception, the Kurdistan Diaspora Confederation has embraced the responsibility of uniting Kurds worldwide and advancing Kurdistan's national aspirations amidst challenges posed by adversaries of the Kurdish people.

“he has always had a gift for learning new things and taking in knowledge.”



Sporting Success in the UK



A young Kurdish sportsman is progressing towards his Olympic dream in England. Zac Ibrahim, whose father is from Kurdistan (KRG) is having great success in the sport of archery. At 15 years old, he is already in the Archery GB Performance Academy, where the most talented archers are selected for high level coaching.

He trains hard, five times a week, and travels all over the country to tournaments. Ranked second in Great Britain for his age group, Zac has represented England and Scotland in national competitions and this summer he hopes to achieve the qualifying scores required for the European championships, which will take him on to competing internationally.

He first tried archery at a local medieval fair and found that there was an archery club close to where he lives. He went along for the beginners course and although he was just nine years old at the time, he showed promise, and that he was coachable. His father says “he has always had a

gift for learning new things and taking in knowledge.” Until the age of 12 he was pursuing acting as his main hobby, and was very successful. He has an IMBD credit for an independent film called Hard and Soft, which is a real achievement, but now he dedicates himself to learning the art of archery.



Archery in Britain is a low funded sport, very different to football, tennis and athletics, so getting Zac the expensive equipment he needs and covering his expenses for coaching and travel comes down to his father, Ranjbar, who is an interpreter, originally from the village of Bawan and his mum, Amanda, who is a teacher. Zac also has a sister, who is very patient and supports her brother by attending competitions and waiting for him while he trains.

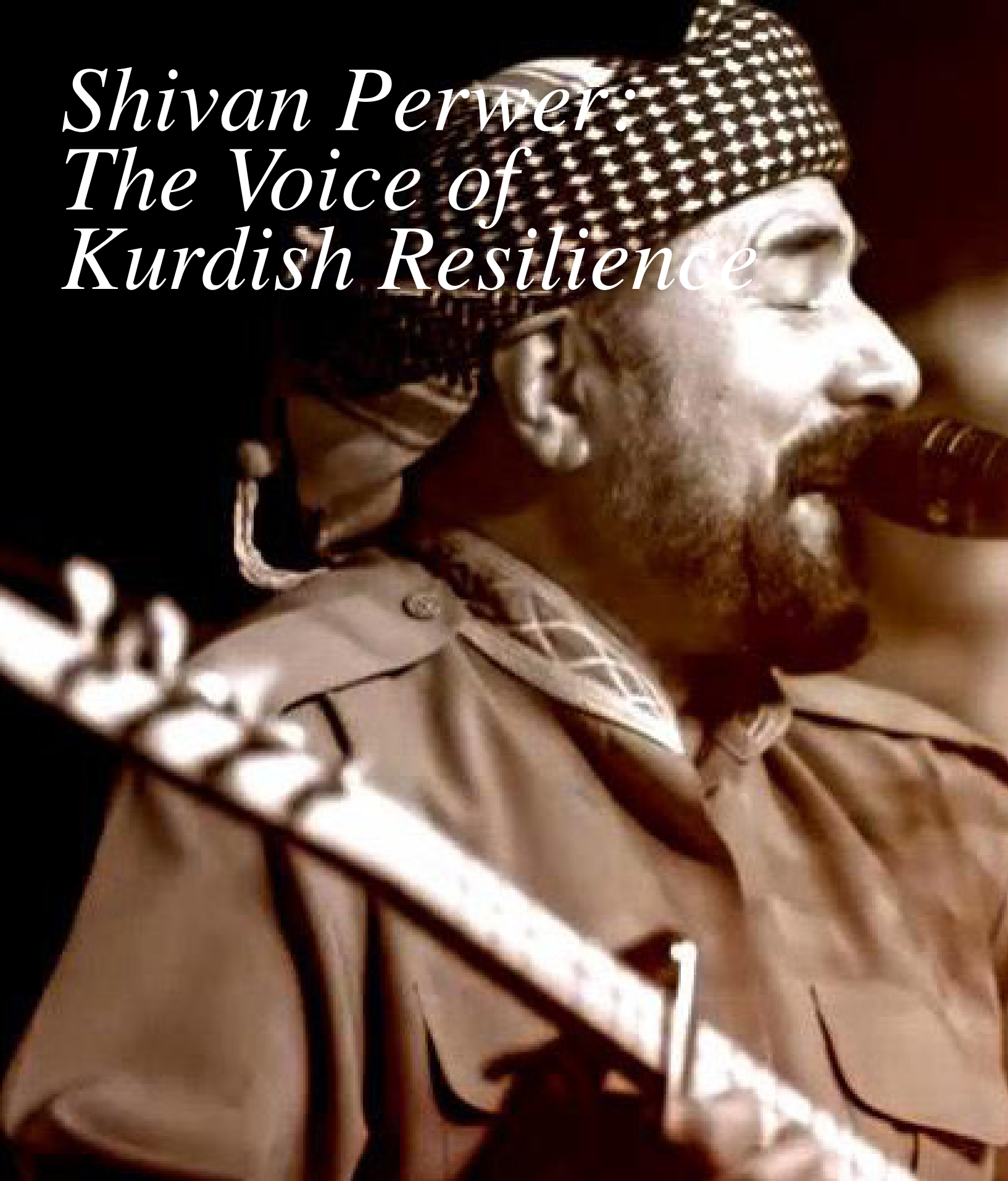
He has attracted the attention of local press, and was interviewed live on BBC radio Derby when they came to his archery club following his selection for the England team. He has been granted free membership for his local gym so that he can work on his strength and conditioning program and is sponsored by a German company called Artebo, who have provided a made to measure chest guard for him. In the future, he hopes to secure sponsorship from one of the biggest archery equipment suppliers, such as the Korean company Win & Win.

To acknowledge his heritage, Zac has chosen to have the Kurdish flag on each of his arrows- it seems to bring him good luck!



To follow Zac’s progress, Zac has an Instagram account **@archery_zac**


The BBC report can be found here: https://fb.watch/sBN_oxked0/



Shivan Perwer: The Voice of Kurdish Resilience

Sivan Perwer, born on September 23, 1955, is an eminent Kurdish poet, writer, musical teacher, singer, and master of the tembûr (lute). Revered as one of the greatest Kurdish musicians of all time, Perwer's music transcends mere entertainment, encapsulating the

Kurdish spirit and struggle. His powerful, emotive voice and innovative musical style have captivated audiences worldwide, while his life story stands as a testament to resilience and cultural pride.



Perwer's journey into music began in the politically tumultuous 1970s. He gained fame during Kurdish protests against Iraqi rule at Ankara University in 1972. His music, which often highlighted the oppression faced by Kurds, was banned in Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Turkey. Despite these restrictions, Perwer's songs, recorded on homemade tapes, were smuggled across the borders, reaching a broad audience, which found solace and strength in his lyrics. The risk of imprisonment or death did not deter him; instead, it underscored the importance of his mission.

In 1976, facing increasing threats from Turkish authorities, Perwer fled Turkey, seeking asylum in Germany. It was in exile that he recorded his first official album of traditional Kurdish songs, solidifying his role as a leading figure in Kurdish music and culture. This move marked the beginning of a prolific career that would see him become not only a musician but also a cultural and political symbol for Kurds worldwide.

Perwer's influence extends beyond his music. In 1991, he performed at the "Simple Truth" Live Aid concert alongside international artists such as Peter Gabriel, Sting, and Paul Simon. The concert, aimed at raising funds for Kurdish refugees fleeing the Gulf War, was a significant humanitarian effort, further establishing Perwer's status on the global stage. His performances brought Kurdish music to a wider audience and highlighted the plight of Kurdish refugees.



Sivan Perwer is also one of the foremost Kurdish “dengbej” (bard), employing a traditional form of singing that tells stories and preserves history. His use of poetry by the late Kurdish poet Cigerxwîn in his music underscores his role in cultural preservation. Cigerxwîn, known for his poetry about the Kurdish struggle and culture, once referred to Perwer as “the voice of his poetry,” highlighting the deep connection between their works.

Perwer’s career, spanning over thirty years, has earned him numerous honorary doctorates and international music prizes. Despite living in exile, his music and message remain deeply connected to the Kurdish struggle. His songs are not just about resistance but also about love, identity, and cultural pride. They resonate with Kurds everywhere, offering a sense of belonging and hope.

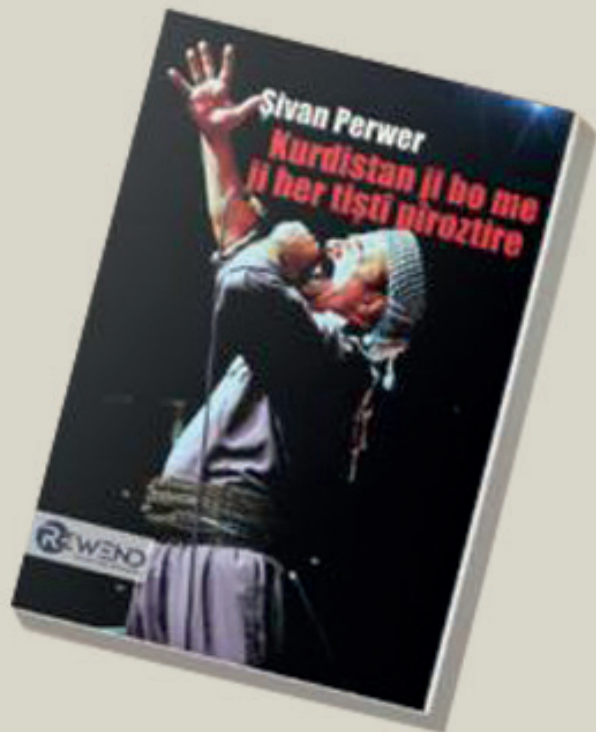
Perwer’s music has been especially influential for the Kurdish fighters known as the Peshmerga, who battled for freedom, particularly against Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq. His songs served as a rallying cry for these warriors, inspiring them to continue their fight. To the Kurdish people, Perwer’s voice was like magic—a call for freedom that transcended generations. Regardless of one’s age, his music spoke directly to the heart, stirring a deep yearning for liberty and justice.

Today, Perwer’s legacy continues to inspire new generations of Kurdish artists and activists. His contributions to music and culture are invaluable, making him a true icon of Kurdish identity and resistance. As a musician, poet, and cultural ambassador, Sivan Perwer’s work ensures that the rich cultural heritage of the Kurds is preserved and celebrated. His life and music are a testament to the power of cultural expression in the face of adversity, making him an enduring symbol of the Kurdish spirit.

In 2004, Perwer took a significant step towards preserving and promoting Kurdish culture by establishing the “Sivan Perwer International Cultural Foundation” in Frankfurt, Germany. The foundation aims to support Kurdish artists and cultural initiatives, ensuring that the rich heritage of Kurdish music and arts is maintained for future generations. This initiative reflects Perwer’s deep commitment to his cultural roots and his desire to see Kurdish culture thrive.

Perwer’s discography is extensive, featuring over twenty-five albums. His works include “Govenda Azadîxwazan” (1974), “Ey Ferat” (1976), “Helebçe” (1987), and “Roj û Heyv” (2000). His music is characterised by its emotional depth and innovative use of traditional Kurdish instruments. Beyond his vocal talents, Perwer is celebrated for his instrumental arrangements and expressive melodies, which have opened new horizons for Kurdish music and given it international recognition.





The Issue of Pluralism in Iraq - Religions and Religious Sects as an Example

Written by Dr. Chenar Saad Abdullah

The Middle East is considered the cradle of the three religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). In addition to these three, there are many other religions and sects dating back centuries, and despite the many wars and attacks they have subjected to, they have been able to maintain their existence. Examples include Zoroastrianism, Yazidism, Sabian, Baha'i, etc.

Political and social events in the world and the region have influenced the increase in the number of followers of these religions. Wars, attacks and occupations that occurred under any political-religious pretext have been particularly influential. After the First and Second World Wars and the formation of new states in the Middle East, the danger of destroying religions decreased somewhat, especially after nationalist movements replaced religious and sectarian conflicts.

However, after this transformation, the development and survival of religions in each country came to depend more on the degree of democracy or non-democracy in the political system of government in these countries. Iraq is considered one of the countries in the Middle East that enjoys rich religious pluralism, but this pluralism did not produce peace and stability for the country or for the sects themselves, neither before nor after the fall of the Baath regime.

In this analysis, we attempt to compare changes in the status of Iraqi religious sects in terms of their population percentage and place of residence before and after 2003. There are limits to what we can say. We must not forget the fact that Iraq is one of the few countries in the world that has not conducted a population census since 1997, in addition to the sensitivity of the political situation and the conflicts that have created a state of mistrust. However, we tried to obtain the necessary information through interviews and various sources.

Rights of religious groups in Iraq:

According to the new Iraqi Constitution of 2005, Article 2 of the Basic Principles, Section 1, Islam is the official religion of the state and the main source of legislation.

The second section of the same article, with reference to the protection of the Islamic identity of the majority of the Iraqi people, guarantees the right to religion and freedom of belief to all sects, for example, Christians, Yazidis, and Sabian-Mandaeans. Article 3 of the Constitution stipulates that Iraq is a country of multiple religions and sects. Article 10 of the Constitution refers to the holy places and religious places in Iraq that form part of the religious and civilisational entity, and obliges the state to ensure their reform and respect and guarantee the freedom of their religious decrees.

In the second section (Freedoms), Article 372 stipulates that the state guarantees the protection of the individual from any intellectual, political, and religious coercion. Article 2 also prohibits prostitution, forced labor, slavery, and trafficking in women, children, and sex. Article 42 reaffirms freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Article 43 states that followers of all religions are free to:

- practice religious rituals, including Husseinite rituals.
- The administration of endowments and affairs of religious institutions shall be regulated by law. The state is responsible for freedom of worship and protecting places of worship.

In Iraq, religious affairs are managed through the Sunni Endowment Office, the Shiite Endowment Office, the Christian Endowment Office, the Yazidi Endowment Office, and other sects, including the Sabean Mandaeans. Religions such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Baha'i, and Kakai are not recognised by any law and are not represented in these offices.

There was a special draft law called the Freedom of Diversity and Prohibition of Discrimination Law in the Iraqi Parliament, but it was rejected and has not been approved yet.

In Kurdistan Region, according to the law of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, all religions Islam, Christianity, Yazidi, Judaism, Baha'i, Sabian-Mandaeans, Zoroastrian

and Kakai are recognised and represented in the ministry.

In Kurdistan Region, a special law was issued to protect religious groups called Law No. (5) of 2015, and for further enrichment, there is currently an amended draft law in the Kurdistan Parliament.

Religious sects in Iraq and demographic changes in this regard:

In this article, we will attempt to shed light on the proportion and location



of the main religious sects in Iraq based on the information obtained and the demographic changes that have occurred in this regard. Here we attempt to analyse the changes that occurred in two different periods: before 2003 and after the outbreak of the ISIS war in 2014.

Islam

According to statistics in 1977, the percentage of Iraqi Muslims was 97%. This percentage is divided into two main sects, Shiites and Sunnis, but since none of the statistics gathered nationally include religious information, the numbers for both sects are relative and questionable.

After researching many sources and obtaining information, there is a consensus that, since the establishment of the Iraqi state in 1921, the percentage of Shiite Arabs has been higher than the percentage of Sunni Arabs. But political events and the state of war and violence in the country changed these numbers dramatically.

For example, Riyadh Ayed Wali Al-Badiri, a researcher at the College of Arts, Al-Qadisiyah University, produced a study entitled “The demographic composition of Iraq and analysis of the ratio in building and

stabilising the state”. It indicates that according to British statistics in 1919, the percentage of Shiite Muslims, including all ethnic sects, amounted to 52% of the population, and rose to 56% in 1932 and was 53% in 1947. After that date, the census did not indicate the religious aspect, and therefore the percentages are unknown. However, the same researcher, without any new census conducted in Iraq after 2003, in his talk about the percentage of Shiites in Iraq, including all nationalities, Kurds, Faili, and Turkmen for the year 2007, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Statistics, was 8.63%. Sunnis, including all ethnic groups, 19.36%.

The numbers presented in the study indicate that the level of Sunnis went into decline after 2003. To obtain more information about the demographic situation of the Sunni community, we attempted to conduct interviews with researchers and activists in this field. Table 1 shows specific information about the proportion and places of residence of the Sunni Arab community in two different periods.

Governorate Name	Percentage of Inhabitants	
	Until 2003	After 2004
Baghdad	70%	40%
Ninaveh	90%	75%
Anbar	100%	Shiite 100%
Salahaddin	97%	80%
Diyala	60%	40%
Kirkuk	60%	
Babil	50%	20%
Wasit	10%	
Basra	20%	
Najaf	10%	
Karbala	5%	
Muthana/ Samawa	5%	

The information contained in this table, although its sources may be questioned, seem close to the truth, because in the events after 2003 many Sunni governorates, due to sectarian conflict and rejection of political reality after the fall of the Baath regime, suffered from war, unrest and attacks and their residents were forced into migration and eviction from their areas. For example, more than 1.5 million people moved to the Kurdistan Region between 2014 and 2015. There are more than two million Sunni Arabs abroad, especially in Qatar, Jordan, Turkey, the Emirates, and others.

According to the interviews, the demographic situation of the Sunni Arab community has changed since 2003 due to war and instability, and although some of them returned to their original areas of occupation, in some areas that were previously inhabited by the Sunni community, the chances of returning to them were low or non-existent. Notable examples include Al-Mahawil District, Nahim, Jurf Al-Sakhr, Al-Musayyab, Alexandria sub-district in Babil Governorate, Baiji District and Ana district in Salahadin Governorate, Al-Khalis District and Al-Ozem District in Diyala Governorate. This situation remained in place until the end of the war against ISIS terrorists in Iraq.

Conflict and sectarian violence in Iraq has not only led to the killing, disappearance and displacement of residents in some of these areas, but has also included the destruction of mosques and forced change. For example, in Wasit Governorate, 36 Sunni mosques were destroyed and three of them were converted into hussainiyas.

Another interesting topic is the names of people who were targeted and some of them had to change their names due to threats. Examples of male names include Omar, Othman, Abu Bakr, Khalid, Suleiman, Marwan, and Muawiyah. Female names include Aisha, Hafiya, etc.



Christianity

Christians, consisting of fourteen different sects, are one of the indigenous communities of the region, and include Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriacs, and Armenians.

According to the information we obtained from Christian representatives in the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, the number of this sect before 2003 ranged between 1.5 and 2 million people. Their main place of residence was in the governorates of Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Erbil and Dohuk in the Kurdistan region. This is in addition to the other governorates (Nasiriyah, Anbar, Kirkuk, and Amara).

The situation in Iraq for Christians after 2003 led to a decline in their numbers and the displacement of many of them.

The events that followed 2003 gradually threatened the survival of this community and the practice of religious rituals in churches. Here are some examples of events that have affected Christians as a religious community since 2004:

- In August 2004, four attacks were carried out on Christian places of worship in Baghdad. In the same year, an attack in Mosul killed 10 people and injured 50 others.
- On October 16 2004, five churches in Baghdad were attacked by terrorists.
- On December 17, 2005, Bishop George Katsmoussi disappeared in Mosul.
- On August 15 and November 19, 2006, two priests from the Chaldean Church went missing in Baghdad.
- On June 3, 2006, Pastor Hani Abdel Ahad was killed.
- On October 13, 2007, two Syriac Catholic priests disappeared at the hands of an unknown group.
- On December 6, 2008, a car bomb explosion targeted the Chaldean Church in Kirkuk.
- On February 29, 2008, the head of the Chaldean Diocese of Mosul, Faraj Raho, was kidnapped, along with two of his bodyguards, and was found dead on March 13 near Mosul.
- On April 5, 2008, a Syriac Orthodox priest named Youssef Adel was killed in Baghdad.
- On May 2, 2010, buses carrying 1,200 Christian students from Qaraqosh to Mosul University were attacked with bombs, killing two people and wounding 200 others.
- The bombing of Sayidat Al-Najat Church in Baghdad on October 31, which killed 50 people and injured 75 others.

Ongoing terrorism and sectarian conflict in Iraq have forced large numbers of Christians to flee their homes and cities. For example, according to the Syriac Church in Australia, there are 200,000 Iraqi Christians living there. This is despite the fact that a very large number of people have moved to the cities of the Kurdistan region, especially to Erbil and Zakho.

According to information from Ghazi Raho, head of the Christian sectarian council in Jordan, in an interview with ILAF magazine, there are only 450,000 Christians left in Iraq.

Regarding the decrease in the number of Christians in Iraq, Patriarch Louis Sako, head of the Chaldean community in Iraq, said on June 27, 2017, that the percentage of Christians in Iraq was previously about 4%, but this number has now decreased to 2%.

The ISIS attack on the region after 2014 made the situation of Christians more difficult. According to the information received, 82 churches were destroyed or damaged in the Nineveh Plain.

Table (2) Christians victims from 2003 to 2014 obtained from Christian representatives in ministry of endowments.



Year	Governorates									
	Baghdad	Kirkuk	Mosul	Diyala	Basra	Salahaddin	Anbar	Erbil	Duhok	Total
2003-2006	378	26	168	6	15	15	14	2	2	Unknown 14
2007-2010	217	22	173	6	7	1		1	1	Samara1
2011-2014	24	7	21			1				Sulemani1
2015-onward	5		1			1	1			Ramadi1
Total	624	55	362	12	22	18	15	3	3	1131

Crimes committed by ISIS against the Christians from 30/4/2007 to 18/7/2014 and documented by (Shlom) organisation.									
Total	Killed	Kidnapped	Threatened	Slavery	Lost	Physical Voilence	Sexual Voilence	Change of reigion	Rescued
250	28	187	193	204	64	203	3	234	169

Yazidi sect

The Yazidi religion is considered one of the oldest religions in the Middle East, dating back 4,000 years. Sinjar and the Nineveh Plain are their main places of residence.

There is different information about the proportion of the Yazidi population, according to the report Iraqi Minorities: Participation in Public Life by Preti Taneja.

The number of Yazidi Kurds was previously estimated at about 700 000 people, but after the events of 2003, due to war, attacks, instability and pressures on the followers of the religion, the number decreased to about 500 000 people.

Before the occupation of ISIS, most of them, 90%, lived in Sinjar and the Nineveh Plain, and only a small percentage, 10%, lived in Dohuk Governorate. Table 4 shows Yazidi victims, which is the latest corrected information from the Yazidi Religious Affairs Directorate in the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Kurdistan Region.

The situation of Yazidis after ISIS attacks 2014- 2018		
#	Type of Victim	Ratio
1	Total ratio of Yazidis after ISIS war	550.000
2	Martyrs	1293
3	Displaced	360.000
4	Orphans	2745
5	Orphans of father	1759
6	Orphans of other	407
7	Orphans without parents	359
8	Children whose fathers captured by ISIS	220
9	Emigration	100.000
10	Lost	6417
11	Lost (Male)	3547
12	Lost (female)	2870

Note: Due to the loss of a large number of Yazidi Kurds during the war against ISIS and the kidnapping and enslavement of women and girls from this sect, efforts to search for the fate of the missing and kidnapped are continuing, and therefore the data in the table are constantly changing. Data in the table are for the year 2018.



Baha'is

The emergence of the Baha'i faith dates back to the nineteenth century. Followers of this religion are found in 200 countries, including Iraq.

With the emergence of this religion at the hands of Bahá'u'lláh, its followers were constantly subjected to persecution, killing, and the destruction of their religious places.

Their number is unknown due to the lack of official recognition of the religion, although during the monarchy they were allowed to declare themselves publicly and they had their own religious place and cemetery in Baghdad in 1952 called Al-Rawdah Al-Rabadiya.

After the Baathists came to power, the pressure on them increased day after day. In 1970, the Revolutionary Command Council banned the religion and ordered them to embrace Islam. Anyone who violated the order faced 20 years in prison and the death penalty if they continued. After the fall of the Baath regime in 2003, and despite the abolition of many laws and decisions issued by the Baath regime, the laws related to the Baha'is remained unchanged. One of the biggest problems for followers of this religion is the lack of identity cards and even passports, as they must register themselves as belonging to another religion in order to possess them.

Sabian-Mandaean:

Sabians are one of the oldest surviving religions in the world. According to the Preti Taneja report, the number of Sabians in previous decades ranged between 60,000 and 70,000, most of whom lived in Iraq, but after 2003 and the ISIS war, the number decreased to 5000 people. Their main places of residence were previously in Baghdad, Al-Amara Al-Nasiriyah, Basra, Ramadi, Mosul, Salahaddin, Kirkuk, and Khanaqin. But after 2003, they were subjected to killing and displacement, especially since many of them worked as goldsmiths and professionals and were wealthy, so they became targeted to be victims of disappearance, murder, and torture. Currently, they are no longer present in some of the places where they were, for example Mosul, Hilla, and Salahaddin. In Diwaniyah there are very few, and in Ramadi they live in secret. Most of those remaining in Iraq now live in the cities of the Kurdistan region, especially Erbil. This is despite the fact that a large number of people are constantly migrating abroad. A representative of the Sabians in the Ministry of Religious Affairs told us in an interview that there are currently 3,000 Sabians living in Jordan.



The main places of Baha'ism were in Baghdad, Basra, Amara, Hilla, Khanaqin, Mawil, Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah. After 2003, some of them migrated, others lived in hiding, and others came to the cities of Kurdistan.

Kakai:

Kakai, also known as Ahl al-Haqq, is another ancient religion in the region. Before 2003, a large portion of Kakai Kurds settled in Sharban, Mandali, Qazaniya, Khanaqin, Kalar, Halabja, Douz, Daquq, Kirkuk, Hawija, Riyadh, and Kalak in Mosul Governorate (Gokjali and Khazir). The number of Kakais was estimated at 200,000, but after 2003, like other religious sects, they became victims of sectarian and religious conflict and were subjected to killings and various attacks by terrorist groups. Currently, the Kakais no longer exist in some of the places where they used to live, such as Riyadh and Mandali. Many were forced to become Shiites. They also did not stay in Kokli and Karama in Mosul. As a result of the unstable conditions that Iraq has witnessed in recent years, 600 families fled, some of whom were displaced to the cities and towns of Kurdistan. This is in addition to the bombing and destruction of six holy places for the Kakai.

Zoroastrianism:

Zoroastrianism is considered one of the oldest religions in the Middle East, dating back 3,500 years. Followers of this religion can freely practice their religious rituals outside the Kurdistan Region. But they are under threat from religious extremists, like other religious sects.

Conclusion

- After 2003, most religious sects were greatly affected in terms of population and residence places.
- The damage does not only include changing their place of residence and population, but many of these sects were greatly damaged in terms of life, homes, places of worship and sacred culture, for example, the Yazidi Kurds and Christians in Iraq.
- In terms of religion and denomination, the demographic composition of Iraq has changed significantly since 2003.
- Trust between religious sects in Iraq has greatly weakened.
- Before 2003, societies were in conflict with a dictatorial regime, but all societies are now in conflict with each other, officially or secretly.

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Barzani's Memoir *Receives Recognition* at 2024 International Book Awards

Written by Wladimir Van Wilgenburg



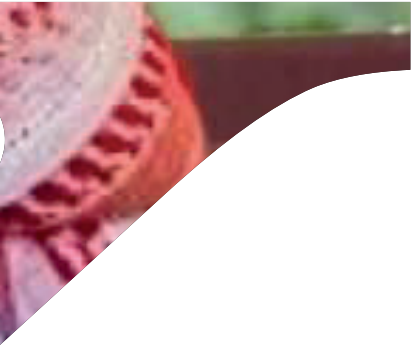
2024
INTERNATIONAL
BOOK AWARDS
15th Annual Awards Sponsor

FINALIST - HISTORY

Barzani and the Kurdish Lib
Fourth Edition, 1975-1990 - The
Part One and Part
by Masoud Barzani
translated by Davan Yahy



***This award is
a landmark
moment in
Kurdish history***



The memoir of former Kurdistan Region President and leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Masoud Barzani was announced as one of the finalists in the general history category at the 2024 International Book Awards on June 20.

The memoir, *Barzani and the Kurdish Liberation Movement: Fourth Edition, 1975-1990 - The Gulan Revolution, Part One and Part Two*, was translated into English by the UK-based author Davan Yahya Khalil.

Over 500 winners and finalists were announced in over 100 categories. The awards were presented for titles published in 2022, 2023, and 2024.

The 2024 International Book Awards is sponsored by American Book Fest, based in Los Angeles and Phoenix, United States.

“This award is a landmark moment in Kurdish history for several reasons. It brings global attention to Kurdish history and the Kurdish struggle for autonomy, highlighting the Kurdish people’s rich cultural and historical narratives. By winning such a prestigious award, President Barzani’s book underscores the importance of Kurdish literature and contributes to preserving and disseminating Kurdish heritage and stories,” Khalil said.

“The memoir offers an in-depth look at significant events and personal experiences within the Kurdish liberation movement, providing valuable insights and documentation for future generations.”

He said the book covered the period between 1975 and 1990, a crucial era in Kurdish history marked by intense struggle and significant developments.

Khalil underlined that the recognition of former President Barzani’s memoir at the 2024 International Book Awards not only honors his contributions to the Kurdish liberation movement, but also serves as a testament to the resilience and enduring spirit of the Kurdish people.

ONE OF THE FINALISTS!

“A crucial era in Kurdish history was marked by intense struggle and significant developments from 1975 to 1990. The Kurdish Revolution of 1975-1990 followed the Algiers Agreement between Iraq and Iran, which led to the abrupt end of Iranian support for the Kurdish movement in Iraq. This betrayal resulted in a severe setback for the Kurdish forces, temporarily ending organised resistance,” he said.

“Despite this setback, the Kurdish leadership, under figures such as Mullah Mustafa Barzani and later his son, Masoud Barzani, reorganised and continued the struggle for Kurdish autonomy and rights. Their leadership was instrumental in maintaining the Kurdish identity and aspirations during these challenging times.”

Moreover, he said the late 1980s saw the horrific Anfal Genocidal Campaign by the Iraqi regime, against the Kurds, which saw mass executions, forced displacements, and chemical attacks.

“This genocide had a profound impact on the Kurdish people and solidified their resolve to fight for independence and recognition. The Kurdish plight began to gain international attention during this period, leading to increased support from various global actors and the eventual establishment of a haven in Northern Iraq following the Gulf War in 1991.”

Khalil said the recognition of President Barzani’s memoir in the International Book Awards not only honours his contributions to the Kurdish liberation movement but also serves as a testament to the resilience and enduring spirit of the Kurdish people.

“This award is a significant milestone, bringing Kurdish history to the forefront of global literary and

historical discussions and ensuring that the sacrifices and struggles of the Kurdish people are acknowledged and remembered.”

Khalil is an author and journalist, originally from Kurdistan and now based in the UK. Having completed a Masters degree in law, he is a member of the British Association of Journalists, and is the founder of the news site The New Mail.

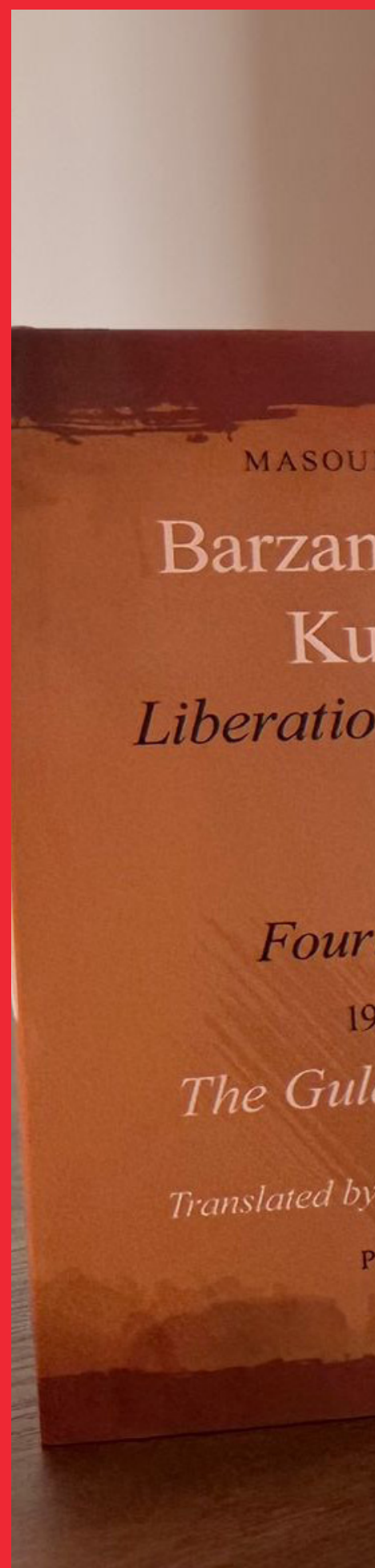
He wrote four books, named Kurdistan: Genocide and Rebirth, Kurdistan: The Road to Independence, The Idea of Kurdistan, and The Brink of Freedom.

The books have covered everything from his personal experiences and the history of Kurdistan’s struggle for independence to its current situation and the likely outcomes of its struggle for autonomy.

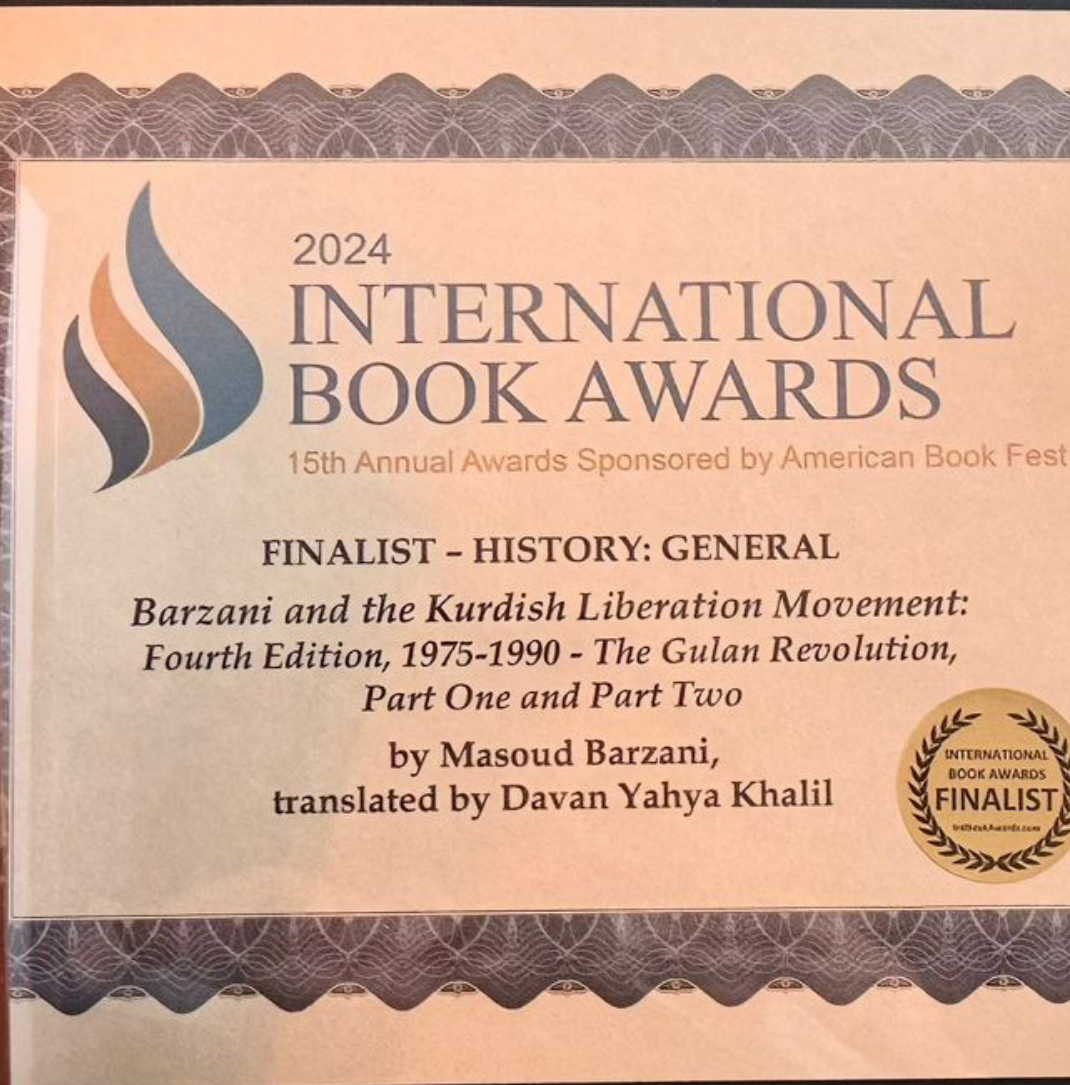
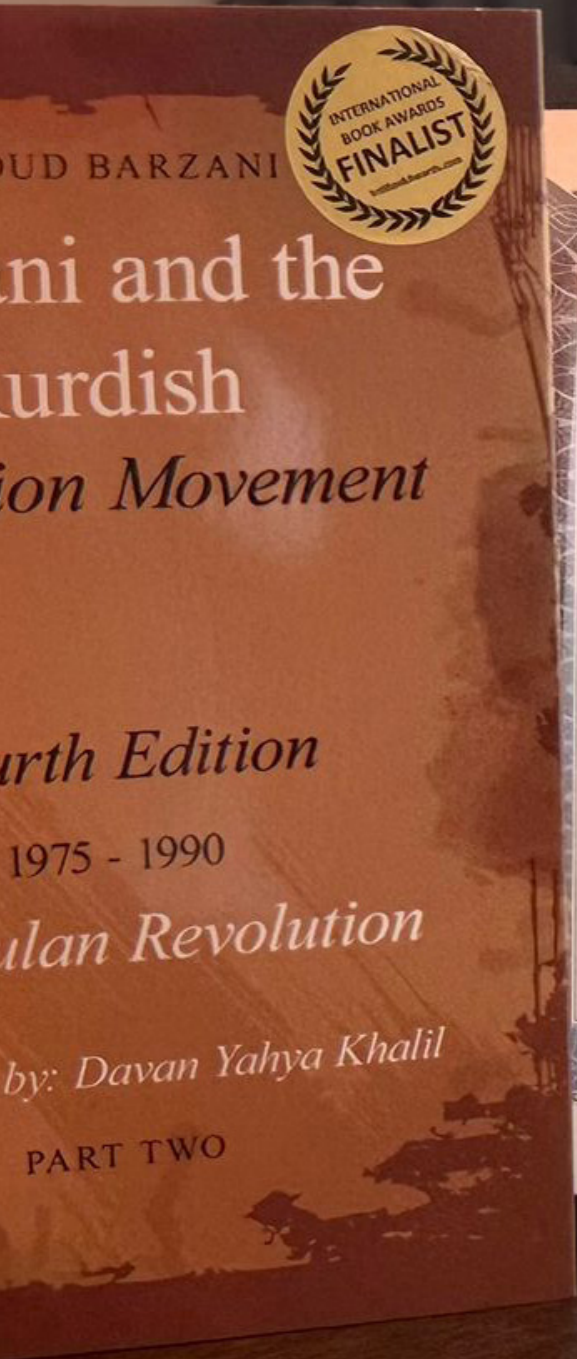
“I think it will be significant and beneficial to the new generation if they could read this book and they will learn more about their history and also will make them think twice that the new Kurdistan which we see now has sacrificed many Kurdistanians until these current days are formed,” Khalil said.

Moreover, he added that at the heart of the book, powerful quotes resonate, acting as flags that remind us of the strong determination and togetherness that have defined the Kurdish people’s spirit.

“One quote stands out: “The men had weapons of honor for the revolution, and the women were responsible for raising children and being patient.”



“ I think it will be significant and beneficial to the new generation if they could read this book. ”





2024

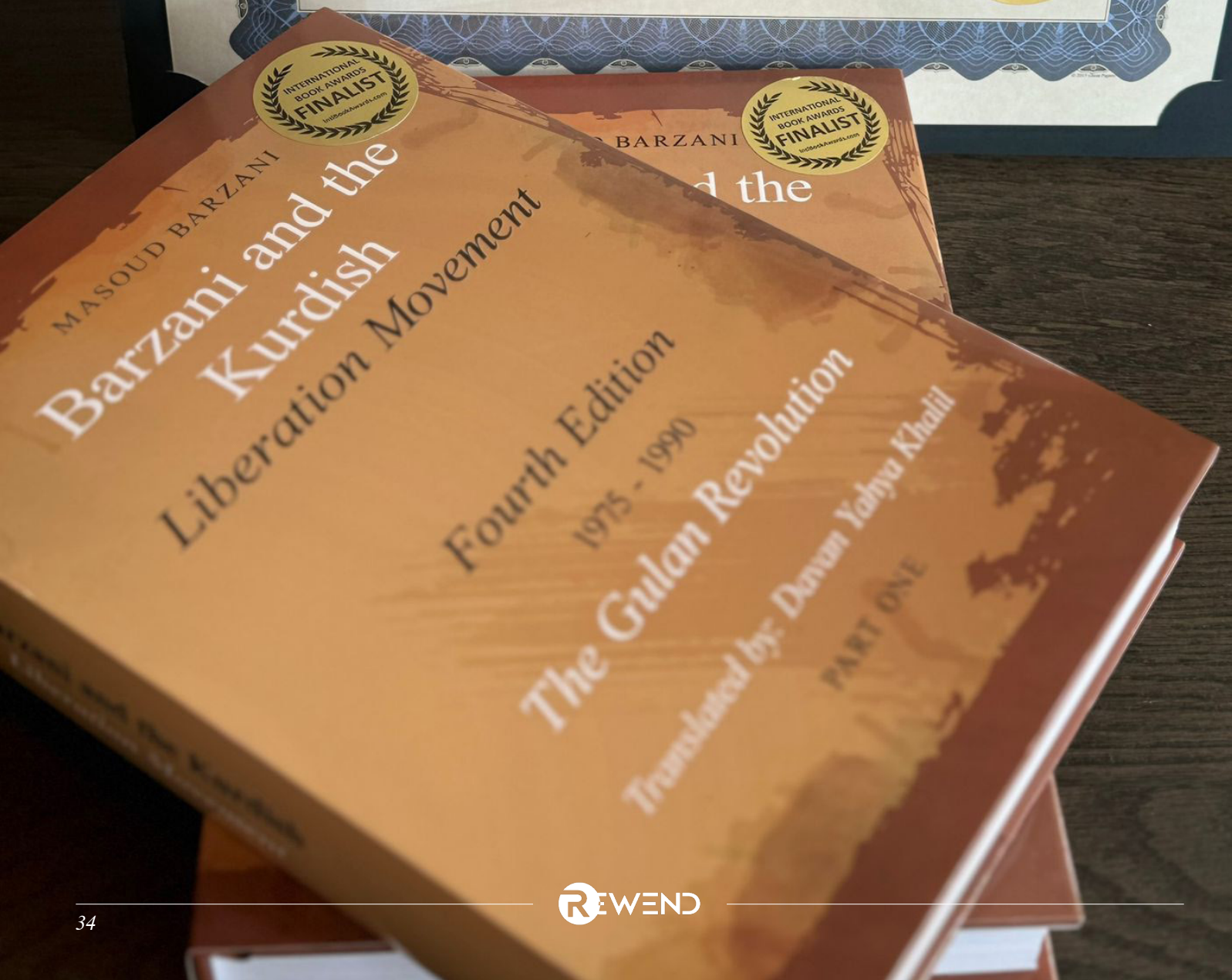
INTERNATIONAL BOOK AWARDS

15th Annual Awards Sponsored by American Book Fest

FINALIST - HISTORY: GENERAL

*Barzani and the Kurdish Liberation Movement:
Fourth Edition, 1975-1990 - The Gulan Revolution,
Part One and Part Two*

by Masoud Barzani,
translated by Davan Yahya Khalil



Understanding how both men and women played important roles during those tough times, the reader sees how everyone worked together, even though they had different jobs or roles, to make a difference,” Khalil stated.

It's not the first time that Khalil's memoirs and books receive recognition.

In 2021, *The Brink of Freedom: How Masoud Barzani Took Kurdistan to the Edge of Independence*, written by Davan Yahya Khalil, was chosen as the winner of the Best Indie Book Award, in which 70 books won different awards, for the category of biography.

Khalil's book is a biography of President Barzani and his ongoing struggle to secure Kurdish independence, as a peshmerga fighter, as a president after the creation of the autonomous Kurdistan Region after international forces created a no-fly zone in 1991.

“From his birth in 1946, Masoud Barzani has been a symbol of Kurdistan's fight for independence. He has fought for it as a peshmerga fighter, led the KDP through some of the most difficult times for Kurdistan, and has been president of the region in the phases that led up to the independence of 2017,” Khalil stated about the book.



“To understand his impact on Kurdistan and its fight for independence, this book seeks to explore the events that made him who he was, and the life of a man who has marked the transition from Kurdistan in rebellion to Kurdistan as a political entity.” Moreover, his book *Kurdistan: Genocide and Rebirth* was Award-Winning Finalist in the “History: General” category of the 2015 International Book Awards

Former President Barzani has shown a keen interest in books and has published a number of them. Moreover, he inaugurates the yearly Erbil International Book Fair.

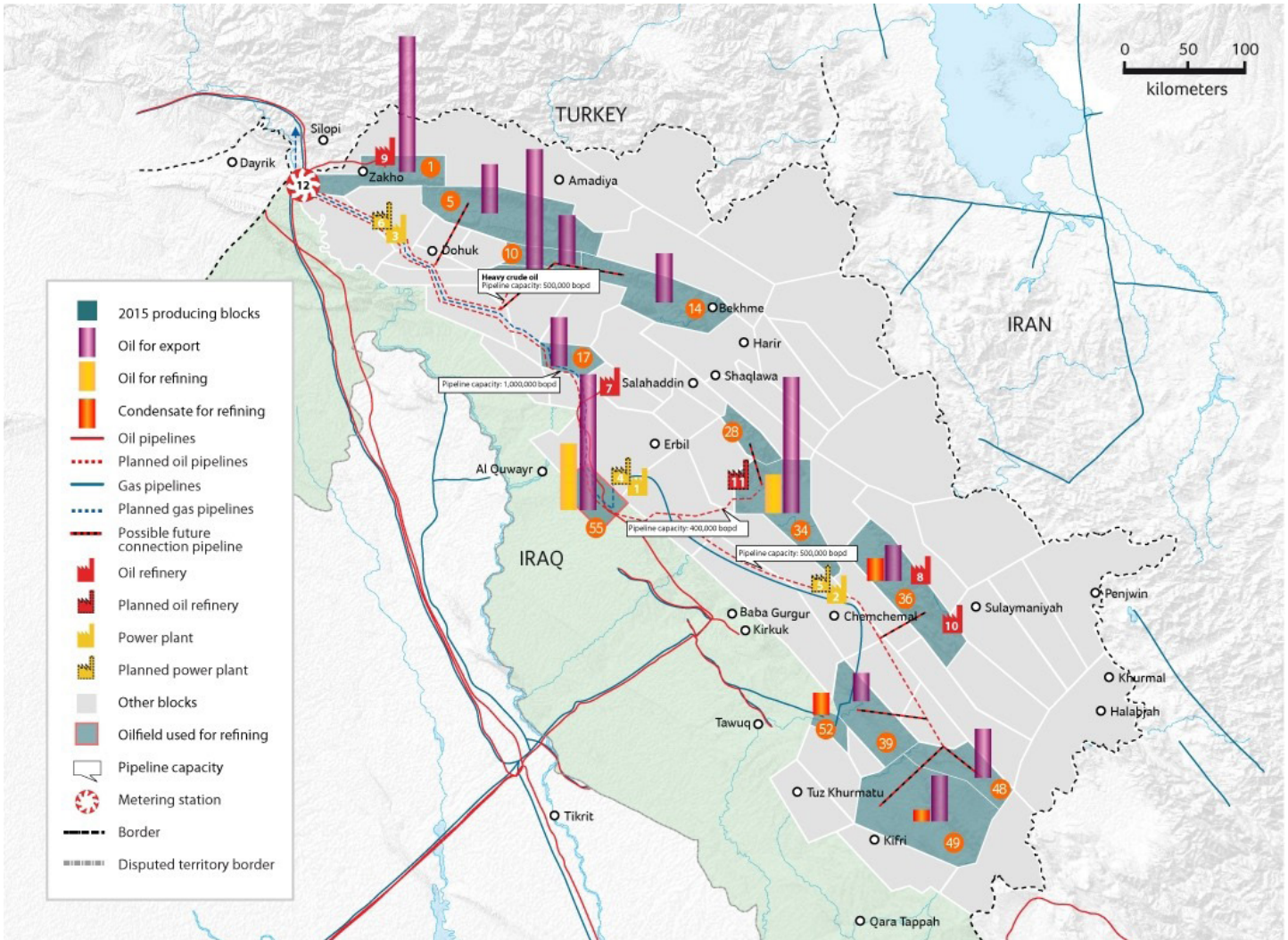


Kurdistan's Oil: What Could Have Been Done BETTER?

By: Associate Professor Ayad Nori Faqi,
the Dean of the Faculty of Science, Soran University



Boasting more than 15 BILLION BARRELS of oil reserves.



The Kurdistan Region is geologically situated amidst rich oil reserves in the Middle East, boasting more than 15 billion barrels of oil reserves. Following the Kurdish uprising in 1991 and the establishment of a no-fly zone in northern Iraq by United Nations Security Council Resolution 688, an opportunity arose for the Kurdistan Region to showcase the Kurds' potential for independence to the world.

A strong economy serves as a key factor for the development and independence of any country. Geographically surrounded by opponents such as Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria, the Kurdistan Region faced challenges in developing its economy. However, after the liberation of Iraq in 2003 and shifts in political thinking in neighboring countries like Turkey, the situation began to change. Therefore, the first step the KRG should have taken was to focus on economic development. In 2003, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) signed its first production sharing agreement in Kurdistan with the Turkish company ‘‘Genel Enerji’’ for the Taq Taq Oil

industry for the Kurdistan Region? Additionally, what improvements could have been made?

In my opinion, the answer to the first question is that attracting international companies for exploration was very necessary, and the decision made by the KRG at that time was highly appropriate. Although these contracts could have been much better and more beneficial for Kurdistan, we must not forget that the decision was fundamentally the right one under the circumstances. The Kurdistan Region lacked the leverage of an independent

industry. The economies in oil producer countries heavily rely on petrochemicals, and developing this sector could have paved the way for economic independence.

Unfortunately, the absence of a domestic petrochemical sector in the Kurdistan Region has left a notable industrial gap. A robust petrochemical industry could alleviate concerns among oil producers in the Kurdistan Region.



Field. Subsequently, in 2004, the Kurdistan Regional Government signed significant production sharing agreements for new exploratory drilling with the Norwegian company ‘‘Det Norske Oljeselskap’’(DNO). These contracts marked the beginning of a new phase of hydrocarbon exploration activity in the Kurdistan Region, with several international companies thereafter signing contracts with the KRG for such exploration and the production of hydrocarbons.

Now, the question arises: how crucial was the exploration and energy

country to impose favorable conditions on companies at that time. Ultimately, though, bringing these large numbers of international companies into the Kurdistan Region was more politically significant than economically. Their presence served as a semi-guarantee for the protection of the Kurdistan Region, a fact that became evident when ISIS invaded Kurdistan.

Regarding the second question about what could have been done better, there are many possible answers, but I will focus only on one significant point here. The KRG should have placed greater emphasis on developing the oil refinery and petrochemical

Given that oil exports through the Iraq-Turkey pipeline have been ceased since March 23, 2023, having petrochemical production companies in Kurdistan could have mitigated the impact on Kurdistan’s oil producers. These companies could have provided alternative revenue streams. Furthermore, the petrochemical industry could have created job opportunities for thousands of people, thereby addressing the issue of unemployment, particularly among recent graduates, which would have been beneficial for the government.

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The Second Cold War War and the Fate of Kurdistan

Mullah Bakhtiyar

Little by little, we are moving towards a Second Cold War. The super powers of the world are in conflict and political

competition. And countries around the world are waiting to see the effects.

In the first Cold War, the most oppressed people were the Kurds. When the Cold War began, it



eliminated the Republic of Kurdistan (1946-1947). As the conflict between the Cold War poles in the West and the East intensified even more, parts of Kurdistan were exposed to disappointment and disasters. The Cold War continued for forty years, and disasters befell the Kurds, leading to the treasonous Algiers Agreement, the elimination of the September Revolution, the deportation of villages, the Anfal, and the bombing of civilian targets with chemical weapons. During this, the East and West took no significant position. Their feelings were not shaken one bit.

Then Kuwait was occupied. Arab and Gulf interests were exposed to danger, and with the end of the Cold War, the sun shone for the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Kurds. Fascism in Iraq and the totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe collapsed.

A quarter of a century has passed since the end of the Cold War and the formation of the liberal, unipolar system. But liberal regimes found that they could not control the world. Today, multiple superpowers vie for control again. The United States and the European Union have considerable power, but China and Russia are together in an international political conflict and geopolitical influence. Brazil and South Africa are with them. India has joined the BRICS alliance, and many Arab countries and Iran are waiting to join it. Briefly:

A quarter of a century after the end of the First Cold War, the world is heading towards a Second Cold War.

How should the Kurds read the new equations for this second Cold War? The great powers that ruled for two hundred years have receded. France's Renaissance era has ended, Britain is no longer in the era of the industrial revolution and democracy, Italy might be the cradle of the European

Renaissance but is now less powerful. The United States was the major power in the First and Second World Wars but is not unopposed today. Russia is resurgent, even though it no longer remains in control of Eastern Europe after totalitarian Stalinism ended.

Political equations changed after the democratic revolution regarding the political map of the world and the influence of the West and Russia. Indeed, most other countries are also undergoing profound change. Latin America, Africa, Arab countries, especially the Gulf countries are all shifting. Many of these regional countries, the Shah's regime, the Ataturk regime, Saddam's regime, and the Syrian regime have come into the embrace of Iran-Russia.

In the First Cold War, Russia led the East Pole and the Warsaw Pact. Currently, China is a leader in the field of science and technology and Russia is an influential country in the military field. Countries such as Japan, South Africa, India, Germany and France are also influential countries. They are not subject to American or Russian influence. Gradually, the United States has lost its influence over Western Europe.

The United States and its friends (Canada, Mexico, Israel and some other countries) are forming a new global pole. China, Russia, and the BRICS countries are in the second pole, while the European Union is the third pole. But when the poles are decided, some Eastern European countries may link themselves to the American pole and some to the BRICS pole. Because in the end, politics is about permanent interests, not permanent friendships. !!In this situation, the world is on the cusp of a second Cold War. We ask, where is Kurdistan in this new equation?

In the First Cold War, all Kurdistan forces were either with the United States and the West without guarantees or with the East without an agreement. As a result, all the struggle of the parts of Kurdistan was in vain and when the Cold War ended, the Kurds did not take advantage of the opportunity.

It is true that southern Kurdistan was able to benefit from the end of the Cold War to some extent, but so far it is divided within this game, and has also fought a civil war.

The other parts of Kurdistan, in the midst of these events, did not take sides. The lack of a common strategy in (the north, the east, and the west) made the Kurdish liberation movement a victim of the events.

“

There is a risk that southern Kurdistan will lose some of what it gained in 1991 and the region will become a victim of the Iraqi parliament and the Arab national-sectarian federal court.

”

In conclusion, I say: the Kurdish forces in the four parts of Kurdistan must review their strategy. It is a strategy whose basic elements have remained stuck in the first Cold War. They must review their political philosophy again and have a new reading of the events, phenomena, developments and initial results of the Second Cold War if they are to succeed.

“

*Little by little, we are
moving towards a Second
Cold War.*

”



How did the Confederation start?

Hawraman Ali Tawfik | Deputy President of the Confederation and Head of Media





The Kurdistan referendum was a majority vote in favor of the independence of Kurdistan, producing a situation in which the response of the neighboring countries and other countries of the world to the Kurds was divided in a difficult and fatal way. Instead of respecting the will of the Kurdish people, a siege and threats were imposed.

Thousands of Kurds took to the streets of European countries at the request of President Barzani for the Kurds in the diaspora to support the Kurds in Kurdistan and their demands.

On that day, the loud and unified Kurdish voice responded, by establishing the Kurdish Community Center.

The Kurdish Community Center held its first meeting on 16/11/2019 in the German city of Cologne, then continued with meetings in Mannheim, Bielefeld, Berlin, Siegen, and Aachen.

Meetings continued in Austria, Vienna, Copenhagen, Denmark, Amsterdam, Belgium, Brussels, Finland, Sweden, Britain, France, Switzerland, Norway, and Russia, and efforts to establish the Kurdish Community Center continued.

In early 2020, the first step was to establish a center in Düsseldorf, the capital of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.

Promoting the Kurdish language and serving Kurdish children became the first step in our activities, so online and with the support of the University of Duhok, we started a Kurdish language course, which was in Kurdish dialect and the Latin alphabet. At the same time, there were courses in the Sorani dialect in Kurdish-Arabic alphabet which lasted for six months and for four courses. We were able to gather Kurdish children from most European countries in several classes. This was while, in Russia, we were able to provide material and moral assistance to the Kurdish school.

Since February 2020, we have been holding webinars on Saturdays for several hours on various issues, including the uprising, Halabja, Nawroz, mass exodus, Anfal, the Kurdish revolutions in the north and west, and dozens of political, intellectual and national issues, as well as cultural and literary issues, historical and coexistence between

ethnic and religious communities in Kurdistan, and educational issues.

Establishing the centers was another step in our struggle and work. Initially, centers were established in Germany in Düsseldorf, Nuremberg, Berlin, Hanover, Rhineland; in the Netherlands; in Belgium; in France; in Austria; in Denmark in Benhagen, Jolån; in Sweden; in Norway; in Finland; in Greece; in the United Kingdom in London, Birmingham, and Hull, and in Scotland. Five centers have also been established in the United States, five in Canada, one in Australia, and one in Japan. More than eleven Kurdish unions and organisations around the world have gathered under this umbrella.

The first conference was held in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region, during December 2021.

It was held over three days in a democratic atmosphere, with the participation of President Barzani as a national leader and with the participation of all political forces in the south and other parts.

The Kurdish Diaspora Confederation was established with the participation of about 150 members from representatives of the centers, the Russian Federation, the former Soviet Union, the Swedish Confederation, the Hamburg Platform, Komkar, the German Kurdish Friendship Association, and several other organisations. The meeting was attended by a number of groups, organisations and minorities, as well as by many prominent figures, academics and people with experience in diaspora affairs.





After the Erbil Conference, many serious steps were taken, and this is the first time that the Kurds were able to gather a large number of Kurds from the diaspora in a national project and act as a global organisation to defend national, cultural and Kurdish issues. It marks the start of a trend to collect and unify Kurdish capabilities abroad.

After intensive and continuous meetings, advisory and oversight committees were formed and a research center was established, during which two studies were conducted.

Within the framework, the projects discussed and worked on included the Kurdish Doctors Network, Artists Network, Women and Youth Project. In parallel with these activities, we tried to create committees on genocide and Kurdish friendship in the countries where they live, and their formation continues.

From the beginning, social media was employed, with our first steps on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Telegram. In June 2021, the center's official website was launched, with Radio Round broadcasting via an online application.

KDC currently broadcasts in six languages: Sorani, Kurmanji, Arabic, Persian, English and French.

Rewend then began her media activity as a media website in the Sorani language. She also began her media activity on Twitter, Telegram, Instagram, two Facebook pages, Facebook groups, TikTok, and YouTube.

A project related to education and language issues was implemented, which was organised with the Ministry of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government, so that the Ministry takes responsibility for teaching the Kurdish language to Kurds abroad.

The first course lasted for six months and was completed successfully by the teachers (Shukriya Khan and Sit Zamiran), before the second session began. Currently we are providing lessons for levels up to the sixth grade, and in the future will do so as an online school.

The "I am Kurdish" project is important for us Kurds in the diaspora, and in order to conduct a population census, a special link for registration has been placed on the center's official website.

“

In total, 11 unions, more than 20 organisations and associations, and more than 42 centers were able to gather under the umbrella of the union and continue their struggle and activities and become a unified force to defend the rights of the Kurdish people through civil means.

”



Europe: A Comprehensive Overview of its Political and Economic Landscape

Written by Rewend Staff

Europe, the second smallest continent by surface area, is a powerhouse of political influence and economic prowess.

Comprising around 50 countries, Europe boasts a rich history, diverse cultures, and a blend of old and new world dynamics. This article delves into the political structures and economic frameworks that define Europe, highlighting key elements that contribute to its global significance. Ihil moluptatis prorepudi officid et as exceptius dolupti reprem quati quidit velignis ullo cusapid endebis nam voloratatqui autatquibusapi diciliberem fugiti occus doloribus renis ipsantem dolessimi, sapientur si reptio



Political Landscape

The European Union (EU)

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. Established through the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, the EU has grown into a significant political entity, fostering economic cooperation and political stability across the continent.

Institutions of the EU: The EU's main institutions include the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council, and the Court of Justice of the European Union. These bodies work together to implement EU policies, legislate, and ensure adherence to EU laws.

EU Membership and Expansion:

The EU has seen several rounds of expansion, with the most recent being Croatia's accession in 2013. Discussions about future expansions, including potential membership for Western Balkan countries, continue to shape EU policies.

Non-EU European Countries

Not all European countries are part of the EU. Notable examples include Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom (which left the EU in 2020). These countries often have their own bilateral agreements with the EU to facilitate trade and cooperation.

The United Kingdom: The UK's exit from the EU, known as Brexit, has had significant political and economic repercussions. The UK now operates under a separate set of regulations and trade agreements, navigating its post-EU future.

Eastern Europe: Countries like Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus are at various stages of seeking closer ties with the EU or facing political challenges. The EU's Eastern Partnership program aims to strengthen relations with these nations.

Political Stability and Challenges

Europe enjoys a relatively high level of political stability, with established democracies and a strong rule of law. However, it faces challenges such as:

Populism and Nationalism: The rise of populist and nationalist movements has disrupted traditional political landscapes in countries like Hungary, Poland, and Italy. These movements often challenge EU policies on immigration and integration.

Migration and Refugee Crisis:

Europe continues to grapple with the complexities of migration, especially with ongoing conflicts and economic hardships driving people from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia to seek refuge in Europe.

Security Concerns: Terrorism, cyber threats, and geopolitical tensions, particularly with Russia, pose ongoing security challenges for Europe.

Economic Landscape

The Eurozone

The Eurozone refers to the group of EU countries that have adopted the euro (€) as their official currency. The euro is the second most traded currency in the world, symbolising Europe's economic unity and strength.

Monetary Policy: The European Central Bank (ECB) is responsible for monetary policy in the Eurozone, aiming to maintain price stability and foster economic growth.

Economic Disparities: While the euro fosters economic integration, disparities exist among member states. Countries like Germany and the Netherlands are economic powerhouses, while others like Greece and Portugal have faced significant economic challenges.

Major Economies

Europe is home to some of the world's largest and most advanced economies.

Germany: As the largest economy in Europe, Germany is a global leader in industries such as automotive, engineering, and manufacturing. It plays a crucial role in EU economic policies and decisions.

France: France boasts a diverse economy, strong agricultural sector, and a robust industrial base. It is a key player in EU politics and a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

United Kingdom: Despite Brexit, the UK remains one of Europe's largest economies, with significant financial services, technology, and creative industries.

Trade and Industry

Europe is a global trading hub, with a strong emphasis on free trade and economic cooperation.



Internal Market: The EU's single market facilitates the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people, boosting economic efficiency and growth.

Trade Agreements: The EU has trade agreements with numerous countries and regions, including the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada and trade deals with Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam.

Challenges and Opportunities

Europe's economic landscape is continually evolving, facing both challenges and opportunities.

Digital Transformation: Europe is investing heavily in digital infrastructure and innovation, aiming to lead in areas like artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and green technologies.

Aging Population: An aging population poses challenges for pension systems, healthcare, and workforce availability. Policies to address demographic changes are critical for sustainable economic growth.

Environmental Sustainability: The European Green Deal aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. This ambitious plan includes investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and circular economy practices. Europe's political and economic landscapes are complex and dynamic, shaped by historical legacies, cultural diversity, and contemporary challenges. The EU remains a central force in fostering unity and cooperation, while individual countries navigate their unique paths. As Europe continues to adapt to global changes, its commitment to democracy, economic integration, and sustainable development will be pivotal in maintaining its global influence and prosperity.



What are Nitazenes? UK government is behind the curve in tracking new, lethal drugs

Written by Ranjbar Bawani

Deadly, illegal drugs known as nitazenes are being smuggled into the UK inside dog food and catering supplies, a BBC investigation has found.

Nitazenes - more deadly than heroin - have recently been linked to nearly three UK deaths a week, on average. The BBC also found the drugs were being offered for sale on social media platforms, including X and SoundCloud.

Nitazenes are synthetic drugs produced in laboratories, unlike naturally occurring opioids, such as morphine and codeine, which come from poppy plants. They were first developed by a Swiss company working to develop morphine alternatives in the 1950s. However, their risks prevented them from being introduced to the market. In 2019, Nitazenes, nicknamed “Frankenstein opioids”, were found in street drugs for the first time.

They are similar to heroin and morphine, but can be several hundred times more potent.

Examples of nitazines include:

- **Metonitazene**
- **Etonitazene**
- **Butonitazene**
- **Isotonitazene**
- **Clonitazene**

It is thought that users often take them unknowingly, because they are hidden within other illegal substances by dealers looking to cut production costs.

Nitazenes have been found by a publicly funded testing lab in a range of drugs, including street heroin and black-market pills, which dealers wrongly claimed contained anti-anxiety drugs, such as Xanax and Valium.

How do nitazenes look?

Generally, nitazenes are found as powders, but can be presented as capsules or liquids for injection. Their colours can range from off-white to yellow to brown. When mixed with other drugs, such as heroin or fentanyl, they are not

detectable by look or taste. When a nitazene is added to a drug, it makes it more potent, more addictive, and less expensive.

Nitazenes can also be manufactured into pills under different names. An example would be oxycodone, an opioid prescribed by doctors.

Toxicity and Overdose

Nitazenes can be highly toxic due to their extreme potency. The toxicity begins when the drug excessively activates the body’s mu-opioid receptors, leading to several harmful effects and potentially death:

1. **Respiratory Depression:** One of the primary dangers of nitazenes is their ability to cause severe respiratory depression. Opioids suppress the brainstem’s respiratory centers, reducing the drive to breathe. This can lead to hypoxia (low oxygen levels), brain damage and eventually death, if not promptly treated.
2. **Central Nervous System Depression:** Nitazenes can cause profound sedation, stupor, or coma due to their depressant effects on the CNS. This can impair consciousness and protective reflexes, increasing the risk of aspiration and further respiratory compromise.
3. **Bradycardia and Hypotension:** Excessive opioid receptor activation can also lead to decreased heart rate (bradycardia) and low blood pressure (hypotension), which can contribute to decreased perfusion of vital organs and shock.

Is there an effective treatment for a nitazene overdose?

In cases of a nitazene overdose, high doses of naloxone may be needed, which is used by emergency responders to revive victims of heroin overdoses or fentanyl overdoses. Naloxone, is a synthetic opioid overdose reversal medication that is approved and regulated by the MHRA. It is not always possible to reverse the effects of an overdose.

If you or someone you know struggles with substance use, a range of help is available via the link below:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/recreational-drugs-alcohol-and-addiction/drug-and-alcohol-addiction-useful-contacts/>



Shanidar Cave: A Portal to Ancient Human History and Kurdish Heritage



Image reference: Rewend Staff

Nestled in the rugged mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan lies Shanidar Cave, a site of immense archaeological significance. This cave, situated in the Barzan region, has been a focal point for scientists and historians eager to uncover the mysteries of our ancient past. It offers a unique window into the

severe injuries. His remains suggest that Neanderthals had a capacity for compassion and care, as his survival would have required considerable assistance from others. This challenged the prevailing notion of Neanderthals as brutish and incapable of complex social behaviours.

The Kurds, an indigenous ethnic group in the Middle East, have a history that dates back thousands of years. Often referred to as one of the world's largest stateless nations, the Kurds have faced significant political and cultural challenges. Despite these hardships, they have maintained a rich cultural heritage, characterised by a unique



lives of Neanderthals and intertwines deeply with the rich tapestry of Kurdish history and culture.

The Archaeological Significance of Shanidar Cave

Shanidar Cave gained international attention through a series of excavations that began in the mid-20th century. The site first made headlines in the 1950s and 1960s when archaeologist Ralph Solecki unearthed several Neanderthal skeletons. These findings were groundbreaking, providing crucial insights into the life, death, and burial practices of Neanderthals.

Among the most significant discoveries is the skeleton known as Shanidar 1, a male Neanderthal who exhibited signs of having lived with

More recently, in 2018, the discovery of Shanidar Z, a female Neanderthal, has further enriched our understanding. Her carefully arranged burial, with a rock cushion under her head, hints at ritualistic practices and a level of sophistication that has previously been underestimated.

The Intersection with Kurdish Heritage

Shanidar Cave is not just an archaeological site; it is also a part of the Kurdish cultural and historical landscape. The Barzan region, where the cave is located, is home to the Barzani tribes, known for their strong sense of identity and history. The Barzanis have long been central to Kurdish resistance and the struggle for autonomy.

language, traditions, and a profound connection to their land.

Rediscovering Kurdish Roots through Shanidar Cave

The discoveries in Shanidar Cave underscore the deep historical roots of the Kurdish people. They highlight a continuity of human presence in the region that extends back tens of thousands of years. This ancient lineage challenges contemporary narratives that have often marginalised Kurdish identity.





Shanidar Cave and its Neanderthal inhabitants serve as a powerful reminder that the Kurdish people are not newcomers to this land. Instead, they are the inheritors of a legacy that stretches back to the dawn of human history. This connection to ancient human ancestors reinforces the Kurds' rightful place in the historical and cultural fabric of the Middle East. Shanidar Cave stands as a testament to the profound and

ancient history of human civilisation in Iraqi Kurdistan. It bridges the gap between the distant past and the present, connecting the lives of Neanderthals with the enduring heritage of the Kurdish people. As we continue to uncover the secrets of Shanidar Cave, we gain, not only a deeper understanding of our ancient ancestors, but also a greater appreciation for the rich cultural history of Kurdistan.



What is the difference between a brand-name and a generic-name drugs?

Written by Dr. Khoybun Palla Bawani



Brand drugs are drugs that are manufactured by the innovator company. The drug is sold under a specific name or a special trademark and is protected by a patent for many years which gives the pharmaceutical company the sole right to sell the drug while the patent is in effect. Brand-name drugs can be available with or without a prescription.

Generic drugs are drugs that are manufactured by other companies after the patent of the innovator company of the brand drug has expired. These companies can produce the drug under a different name from the brand drug and must have the same active ingredient and exact amount of drug as the brand name drug, we can often say that a generic drug must be “pharmaceutically bioequivalent” to provide the same therapeutic benefits as its brand-name version.

To ensure this, before the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves a generic drug, it must pass all the rigorous standards to obtain approval. One of the FDA’s main requirements is that generic drugs must be “pharmaceutically equivalent” to brand-name drugs. Here we are assured that generic drugs have the same purity, safety, strength, stability and reliable quality as brand-name drugs.

Therefore, When you visit a pharmacy and request a specific medication, pharmacists may offer you both generic and brand-name options containing the same active ingredient. They assure you that both types are safe and effective, allowing you to choose based on your preference and their guidance to use the medication safely.

Why are generic drugs developed?

Generic drug companies are established to replicate the therapeutic effects of brand-name drugs and offer comparable benefits. When the patent for a brand-name drug expires, pharmaceutical companies can submit an “abbreviated new drug application” (ANDA), permitting them to manufacture the same medication. Before gaining approval from the FDA, generic drugs must meet stringent standards for safety, efficacy, and quality.

Researchers have observed an annual increase in the prices of most brand-name drugs. In contrast, generic drugs, as confirmed by the FDA, generally cost less than their brand-name counterparts, providing significant cost savings for patients.

In summary, here are several points of comparison between brand-name drugs and generic drugs: -

1- Price:

Typically, generic drugs are cheaper than their brand-name counterparts. According to the FDA, they cost up to 85% less. There are several reasons for this

- A. Reduced Research Costs: Generics bypass the extensive animal and clinical testing required for brand-name drugs, which can span over 10-15 years.**
- B. Same Active Ingredient: They use the identical active ingredient already proven safe and effective in the brand-name drug, eliminating the need for duplicate testing.**
- C. Market Competition: With numerous manufacturers producing generics once the patent expires, competition increases, driving prices down.**

- D. **Patient Preference: Growing patient demand for generics stems from their affordability and equivalent therapeutic benefits, reducing overall medical expenses.**
- E. **Accessibility: Generics provide wider accessibility, making essential medications more affordable and available to a broader population.**

2. Appearance of the pharmaceutical product:

Brand-name and generic drugs must contain the exact active ingredient. However, under US trademark laws, their external characteristics, such as appearance, must differ to some extent, even though this does not affect the safety or efficacy of the drug.

For instance, there may be significant differences in external characteristics like size and color between brand-name and generic drugs.

Why can't the appearance of a brand name and a generic product be the same?

- **It negatively impacts treatment adherence.**
- **It makes drug recognition more challenging for doctors and patients.**
- **It can enhance the placebo effect, by patients who receive inactive substances or treatments they believe to be active medication.**
- **It can also trigger Nocebo effects, where negative expectations about treatment lead to adverse outcomes.**

These factors underscore the importance of distinct appearances between brand-name and generic drugs to ensure proper patient understanding and treatment efficacy.

3. Standards of approval:

For example, the popular drug (paracetamol or acetaminophen) as shown in this picture, the brand drug called (Tylenol) that has its unique brand name and shape. Although the generic drug is similar to the brand drug but only carries the name 'acetaminophen'. Most of the time we call it the scientific name of the drug) which is the active drug and is equivalent to the brand drug.



The following standards are required by the FDA for approval of any generic drug product:

- **A generic drug must be “pharmaceutically equivalent” to a brand drug.**
- **The generic drug must have the same “active ingredient and the same amount” as the brand drug.**
- **The required amount of active ingredient should reach the target site in the body and deliver the correct treatment results.**
- **“Inactive ingredients” in generic medicines should be safe.**
- **Bottles, boxes, or other containers of generic medicines should be suitable.**
- **The labels on generic drugs should be the same as those on brand drugs.**
- **Generic medicines should not deteriorate over time and remain stable.**



4. Quality

In the debate over whether brand-name or generic drugs are better in terms of quality and safety, both types are deemed good and acceptable. Generic drugs approved by the FDA maintain the same active ingredient, quality, purity, safety, strength, and stability as their branded counterparts. Clinical studies generally show minimal differences in treatment outcomes between brand-name and generic drugs across various chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, rheumatism, and psychiatric conditions. Healthcare providers, including physicians and pharmacists, should consider individual patient health conditions and stay informed about the latest research when deciding between branded and generic medications for treatment.



*The Issue of Pluralism in Iraq -
Religions and Religious Sects as
an Example*

